

He got the money—and how! Over whose dead body? Who took the fall—and who paid?

Beginning with Boss X's start as a stump-speaker in a beer-garden, the story carries the reader with him as he builds his city and state "machines"; as he gives half his campaign fund to the Socialist party to beat his more important opponent; as he manufactures the white slave legend to make his party platform; as he finally succumbs to his newer rival in city life, the gangster. This drama is written against a back-drop of big businessmen, stool-pigeons, legislators, joint-proprietors, dry "wets" and wet "drys," gangsters and reformers; all meddling in government with the one thought: "What is in it for me?"

Mr. Crowell here presents a drama that rushes along with the speed of THE FRONT PAGE and the frankness of THE AMERICAN MERCURY. Here, for the first time, are set down the actual dyed-in-the-wool confessions of a mighty political boss who operates the steam-roller in one of our great American cities. Recorded as they are by one of the most astute of American political reporters, these confessions constitute a sensational exposé of just how the boodle is brought home. It is no book for timid patriots: it is a stark recital of what actually goes on in that dim half-world from which the wheels of government are really controlled.

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SOME BORZOI BOOKS

Novels—Spring 1930

FOOTLOOSE McGARNIGAL

By Harvey Fergusson

NOT ON THE SCREEN

By Henry B. Fuller

THE IMMORALIST

By André Gide

THE KRAMER GIRLS

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THE VOYAGE HOME

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By Beatrice Kean Seymour

Published by Alfred A. Knopf



LIQUOR..LOOT AND LADIES

CHESTER T. CROWELL

MCM



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FOR
SCOTT WOODWARD

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This is not an autobiography; this is fiction. I told the story in the first person because I wished to present the action as seen by the political boss. All mankind asserts the justice of its acts and I decided to give that opportunity to the political boss in order that we may know him for what he thinks as well as for what he does.

Chester T. Crowell

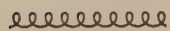


· LIQUOR ·

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· LADIES ·



CHAPTER I

Twenty-eight years ago accident and circumstances combined to pitchfork me into the position of lieutenant and, later, chief of staff to one of the ablest political bosses this country has ever known. Eventually I succeeded him, although I wore no crown. It had become advisable, even by that time, for a boss to exercise his powers as unostentatiously as possible. Now I have retired, not entirely voluntarily. I wasn't kicked out; I quit. The business isn't what it used to be at all. Once it had considerable usefulness; also it had some splendor. Now it is disgustingly sordid and dingy and involves continuous protection of outrageous criminality instead of a few minor vices classified by law as misdemeanors. When I was in the heyday of my power, the proper and logical place for challenging

my power would have been at the ballot box. Nowadays the best way to overthrow boss power would, in most cases, be through the grand jury and prosecution for high crimes.

There are not nearly so many bosses today as formerly, nor have they anything approximating the barbaric power that once attached to the office. Bosses are going the way of emperors, czars and kaisers. Not many are being defeated in open conflict—as a matter of fact, very few ever have been—but conditions are changing nationally, so that the job crumbles, becomes cheap and messy, anywhere you happen to observe it. It was never a glorious job, but at least it was real, and sometimes it was also gaudy. In the course of these reminiscences I shall tell exactly what has happened to the boss business and venture a few predictions as to the far from happy future awaiting the few men who still defy fate by openly flaunting the banners of their predecessors. But I must also say many a kind word for the old-time boss. The sources of his power never were understood, nor, apparently, could the public ever realize how wise he had to be. As a result, the embattled legions who demanded decent municipal government were forever marching against diabolic creatures of their inflamed imagination and failing to identify the ordinary, vulnerable politicians, who simply outsmarted them in the conflict.

My introduction to boss-ruled politics was acciden-

tal. I was born and reared in a town of about two thousand population, where my father was principal of the school. At considerable sacrifice he had sent me to the state university for three years, and then his health failed. That ended my hope of being graduated as a lawyer, so I migrated to the nearest city and got a job delivering groceries. It was pretty hard work, but I managed to study every evening and within a year passed the bar examination. Thus I found myself a full-fledged lawyer in a city of 150,000 population, but without friends, acquaintances, or connections of any kind, and with only about twenty-five dollars capital. Nevertheless, I managed to hang out a shingle and gather in a few ten-dollar fees. For three months I kept about one hop ahead of starvation.

During this time my one luxury was the morning newspaper; it was evident that the coming mayoralty campaign would be a hot one, and I was keenly interested. The paramount issue related to a new franchise for the local street-railway company. Substantial business interests favored the terms proposed by the company, but the mayor did not, and he was running for re-election on this issue. Although I knew that Mayor Drake's intellectual attainments were slight—he was simply a good mixer and the creature of the local boss—it seemed to me that his position with regard to the franchise was unassailable from a legal point of view, and I decided to say so publicly

at the first opportunity. I may as well admit, however, that it had also occurred to me that a few political speeches would be good advertising for my uncrowded law office. There was no hope of my being invited to make a speech, so I invited myself, which wasn't difficult in those days.

Informal meetings were being held every night in at least a dozen saloons—not exactly in the saloons, but in back yards that the saloon-keepers were pleased to call gardens. I invaded one of these strongholds of democracy at eight o'clock one evening and began to get acquainted with the promoters of the meeting. You could easily identify them—they were the ones who were buying drinks for the crowd. There were three of them; one was the local precinct captain, who would preside, and the other two were to make speeches. The crowd was somewhat slow in gathering and quite a number of drinks had to be bought, the outcome being that one of the speakers imbibed more than was good for him.

When I volunteered to speak, the captain first looked critically at his wilted orator and then, turning back to me, said: "'S all right wiz me, brother. Waz y'r name?" That's how I butted in.

The first speaker was Otto Geisler, a carpenter; the importance of Otto related solely to the fact that there were eight or ten other carpenters present, and with them Otto rated "all right." I couldn't make head or tail out of what he said about the street-railway

franchise, and probably no one else did, but they knew which side he must be on in order to have been introduced by the precinct captain, and that sufficed. He spoke about fifteen minutes and then I was introduced—as “judge.” I launched into a learned constitutional argument, embellished with elaborate quotations from the proposed franchise, also figures on the gross revenue of the company, its tax payments, capitalization, and net profits.

The crowd of about sixty bore with me patiently for twenty minutes, and then I noticed that little groups of three or four were succumbing to thirst and disappearing. I could see that I was not a great success, but I was in the middle of my argument and didn't know what to do except continue, so for another twenty minutes I continued. By that time the crowd had melted to less than forty. When I finished, the sickly applause that says “Thank God” was my only reward. Even the chairman dashed away without making the usual perfunctory compliments. I retired to the bar, unnoticed, and ordered a glass of beer. It was a hot night and I had sweated until I simply couldn't sweat any more. As I lifted my glass, I caught sight of the chairman dragging his wilted orator out of the chair where he had fallen asleep. He dragged him up to the bar, gave him a drink of whisky, then a glass of ice water, and literally pushed him out into the garden. A few seconds later I heard a rich barytone voice intone: “My fellow citizens.” It

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was simply marvelous music, entirely worthy of being the prologue to a grand opera.

Every man at the bar was drawn irresistibly back to the garden, and I along with them. There stood the recently wilted but now revived orator, on the iron table that served as a platform, and before him a crowd, spellbound by his lovely voice. I have often wished in later years that someone had had the wits to preserve on a phonograph record a worthy sample of the type of speech he made. Those speeches were incomparable vote-getters for at least two decades. His oratory certainly wasn't argument; sometimes it wasn't even grammatical; but most assuredly it was beautiful music. Napoleon marched through it, George Washington crossed the Delaware, stars twinkled, dew smiled from the grass at early-rising laboring men, little children laughed, a noble mayor prayed through the night for heavenly guidance to save his flock, and wicked corporations hired assassins who skulked through shadowy alleys chewing their murderous mustaches, because they were balked by this group of peerless patriots whose mere assembling around a beer keg had saved the nation. Nothing about the proposed franchise or any other issue! Simply melodrama. But it was a knock-out. Tears trickled down the seamy sunburned faces of men who worked under the open sky, while their horny-handed clapping suggested infantry going into hot action.

I walked from the garden into the bar, puzzled and

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depressed. A fat, round-faced man with a blotchy skin, but pleasing, clear blue eyes stepped in front of me and asked my name. Then my address. Next how long I had lived in the city. Where was my office? How was I getting on? Was I married? It was certainly a thoroughgoing investigation, and yet I didn't resent even the sixth question, much less the first. He had a way with him, that man.

"I'm Mike Callaghan," he finally informed me. "Come and see me tomorrow." I had met the boss!

CHAPTER II

I had met the boss! This was the man who made the mayor, and if the mayor fought franchises, it was because Mike demanded it. This man had even made governors. I went home wondering what he would say to me on the morrow, but elated. I knew that it was going to be something good.

Naturally the names in an utterly frank autobiography of this kind must be fictitious, but they need not be misleading. Mike was of Irish extraction, grandson of an immigrant; both of his parents had been born in this country. As a person in the rôle of boss he was almost too perfect; cartoonists looked at him, groaned, and gave up. It is not easy to draw funny pictures of a man who is already a burlesque. His stomach was a balloon, his nose a ripe tomato, cheeks


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puffy and pimply. The public assumed that he was a heavy drinker. But nearly everything people knew about Mike wasn't true. Rich food, not drink, was his tipple. Having discovered long ago that in delicate negotiations the advantage rests always on the side of the sober party, he encouraged conviviality and drank ginger ale. This simple trick was once widely known and practiced by men whose business required much convivial company and I marvel that it now seems to be forgotten, although drinking is again about as general as it ever was. In company that is drinking the person who has had enough or who does not wish to drink at all should never refuse a glass, but on the contrary be eager for one and fill it with ginger ale or even water. Drinking is primarily social—your companions will not care what you drink, just so you drink with them. That is the easiest of all ways to avoid alcoholic beverages, because it is flawlessly polite. Physically Mike Callaghan had two important assets—clear, fine eyes and the firm resonant voice that proclaims sanity and poise. In judging a man instantly, I rank the voice as of more importance than everything else.

At ten o'clock on the following morning I climbed to the third floor of a dingy office-building near the city hall and strolled through the wide-open double doors of Mike's offices. They were admirably arranged for his uses. The anteroom was about twenty by thirty, practically a meeting hall. Two dozen plain,



unpainted kitchen chairs were ranged around the walls. In the center of the room was a large oak table, littered with newspapers. The linoleum-covered floor was also sprinkled with scraps of newspapers, ashes, and remnants of cigars, although cuspidors were numerous. At the far end of the room were two tables suitable for cards and dominoes. Chalk was available for marking scores on the table tops. Both tables were in use when I entered. Mike's stenographer, a young man, asked my name and reported it to the boss in his private office. Immediately two men came out and I was ushered in. This office, covered with a faded rose-colored carpet, was very small and had only one window. Callaghan sat with his back to it, so that the light fell full on his visitors' faces, but made his own difficult to see; an old, old trick, but still good. In front of him was a large desk and on the other side of this three chairs; the room would accommodate no more. The backs of them almost touched the bookshelves. At his invitation, I sat down in one of these three chairs, while he smiled at me and studied me.

Finally he said: "Young man, you can't make a political speech." My hopes sank. But a moment later they rose again when he added: "You know too much." A long puff on his cigar, and then he continued: "You mustn't try to tell people everything you know. . . . I heard your speech last night. It was rotten. But you've got a good head on you. There's a place for you in politics. Not making speeches, though.

Don't ever do that again. . . . I'm going to see that you get some clients right away. Take care of your law business. . . . I want you to write out that speech you made last night and bring it to me. There was stuff in it that I may want to use some day. Maybe in court. Anyway, I want it. Mayor Drake ought to read it. . . . How'd you like to go to the legislature?"

How should I like to go to the legislature! The thrill gave me goose flesh. The correct answer would have been: "On the fastest express train." Not that I had any pet theories to foist upon my fellow citizens. What I wanted was a chance to earn a living. I said so, and Mike smiled. He was well pleased with me. I can't say that I was equally pleased with him, but his favor was a great improvement over starvation, and I didn't for a moment imagine that so slight a circumstance as this chance meeting was destined to alter the course of my life. Our interview consumed only fifteen minutes, and if nothing at all had come of it, I should not have been astounded. That, however, was not Mike's way.

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### CHAPTER III

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The very next morning I had five new clients. One wanted me to pass upon the title to a three-hundred-dollar lot he planned to purchase. The work was worth more than the lot, but I did it and collected ten dollars. Another faced a charge of assault and battery. I got the case dismissed. The other three were working-men out of jobs and facing eviction from their homes. These cases puzzled me, because my clients had not a leg to stand on. They had paid no rent for four months. The only thing I could think of was to delay the trials in the hope that they would find work. With this plan in mind I went to the courthouse and examined the trial docket to see when these cases would be called. All three of them were clustered at the very bottom of the docket, and no dates had been

set. Under the circumstances I was able to assure my clients that they needn't worry for at least a month, and probably three months. They were greatly relieved, but I could plainly see that this was what they had hoped to hear. The thought occurred to me that this was not their first experience in avoiding eviction.

I questioned them, artfully, and stumbled upon one of the primary sources of boss power. Being members of neighborhood political clubs, they were entitled to whatever influence their chieftains could exercise. Well, their chieftains wouldn't presume to ask a judge to decide a case contrary to the law and the evidence, but they would presume to ask him—since he always had more cases pending than he could try in a year—to shuffle the docket a bit. I didn't know who asked the favor in my three cases—certainly I did not ask it—but later I learned exactly how these arrangements were made. No one ever communicated with the judge himself. That would be improper. Word went no further than to the clerk of the court. He put these favored cases so far down on the docket that they might as well have slipped clear off its pages, and the judge simply left them there. Without anything being said, he understood. No doubt he had handled such cases for the organization as a young attorney long before going on the bench. I handled dozens of them. The standard fee was five dollars, and sometimes remained uncollected for a year, or even three years.

The morality of our procedure in these eviction cases could scarcely be defended; still, the extenuating circumstances could not be overlooked. Very few of these unfortunates were bums, although some wasted entirely too much money on drink. Employment came to them irregularly; dull seasons wasted their small savings, if any; consequently credit was essential to life; they were always behind their bills. Illness or any other misfortune plunged them over the economic precipice upon the edge of which they passed their lives.

Looking back over that phase of our activities, I feel that we did about the most constructive and intelligent social service work of which I have any knowledge, although at the time I shouldn't have known what the words "social service" meant. We had to eliminate instantly all persons who seemed incapable of helping themselves, because they would be of no value to us; but in doing so we avoided the errors which led well-meaning persons with far better motives than ours to waste an enormous amount of money and energy.

No one is devoid of sympathy for the poor, but few realize how baffling is the task of helping them. I want to cite here three authentic examples of poor people who were not criminal, not diseased, apparently not subnormal, and yet simply could not be helped. The first family comprised a husband, wife, and four children; people of pleasant appearance and

kindly. Their case was brought to my attention because they were starving. Something had to be done for them at once. Their neighbors, who were also poor people, could no longer spare the small amounts of food they had been contributing daily. We got the husband a job as night watchman and an advance of five dollars on his monthly wage. At the end of a week the precinct captain called on them to find out how they were getting on. The wife informed the captain that her husband had just quit his job.

"Why?" asked the captain.

"Because," she replied emphatically, "I told him to. I don't like to be alone here all night. I can't stand that. If you want to do something for him, you can surely do something better than night watchman. What kind of a job is that for a married man!" And friend husband nodded agreement. We dropped them instantly, but charitable organizations labored with them for years. If they ever got any good results, I never heard of them.

Another family of eight—six children and the parents—were reported to be half clad, with the temperature about twenty above zero. Investigation developed the fact that "half clad" was an exaggeration; they were not far from naked. We rushed clothing to meet the emergency. About a week later there was a three-alarm call for more clothing and we sent that. About the same time we learned that another call for clothing had gone to a charitable organization and



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that the clothing had promptly been supplied. Under the circumstances I decided that they were probably selling it, and cut them off the list. Months later I learned from the charitable organization that these people burned their clothing when it was soiled instead of washing it. I see nothing mysterious nor incredible in this; clothing came to them for the asking. Apparently it had no value or those who gave it would have exacted a price. Why treasure such trash? Burn it and get more where the last came from!

The most amusing incident, however, relates to a sweet-faced, gentle-voiced little mother of five children, who had been deserted by her husband. She was twenty-six years of age. Her husband had gone off with another woman and she simply did not know what to do. They were about to starve. This was obviously not a case for us, because there was no voter in the family and we were not pretending to be actuated by principles that would make it our duty to help her. A charming old gentleman, a Catholic priest, heard of the case and rushed to her aid. His own parishioners were so poor that he had a reserve fund of only four or five dollars for emergencies, but he tramped from door to door for two days and collected nickels, dimes, and quarters until he had eleven dollars and eighty cents. This he took to the unfortunate mother. She thanked him with tears in her eyes and he felt richly repaid. The next day he called again,

only to discover that the money was all gone and that the family was still hungry. Believe it or not, that woman had paid over all of her money to the solicitor for a firm that enlarges and frames photographs. She had a snapshot of her missing husband, and this was the treasure selected for enlargement and a brave gilt frame. That family remained one of the city's neediest for years. When one group of helping hands became wearied, another took them up. I don't know whatever became of them. Problems such as these simply floor me. I have no idea what ought to be done for, to, or with such people. After much cogitation the only remedy that has occurred to me is chloroform.

One of the strangest of all the phenomena about these people is that they invariably survive—or at least that has been my observation. Whenever they came to my attention, it was always under such tragic circumstances that help would be required within a few days, sometimes hours, or death must ensue. As I have already explained, I frequently had to turn down these appeals, but never have I known the threatened deaths to occur. On the contrary, these people went on and on for years—actually sometimes they traveled to distant states and years later returned, still hungry, half-naked, and facing the same old crisis. With neither pride nor apology I set down the fact that they got very little out of me. However,

it was painful at first not to be able to help them, and the only salve for my conscience was that we gave so much help to others.

Although the city as a whole was prosperous and growing, there seemed to be more men than jobs in every field of employment. The economic structure of such a municipality has always been puzzling to me. Certainly we were producing new millionaires; industry and commerce were thriving; the business district annually sprouted into streets where formerly there had been only homes, and yet the majority of the populace remained close to the danger line.

Knowledge of these people and their problems was the basis of Mike's power. Their point of view was as alien to that expressed in meetings of the local chamber of commerce as though they had lived in a different world. Take the matter of that street-railway franchise as an example. At that time the growth of a city depended upon good street-car service. If you starved your municipal transportation system so that it could not extend its lines, you would choke your city to death. Industries wouldn't be able to use favorable sites in the suburbs; pasture lands available for cheap home sites wouldn't be developed and housing conditions would become bad. That was the problem as business men saw it. But to Mike's cohorts the street-car company stood between them and their jobs, collecting toll like a robber baron of the Middle-Ages. Five cents in the morning before ever you

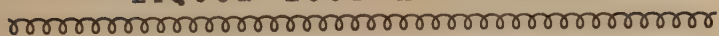
could reach the place where spade, trowel, or hammer awaited you; five cents in the afternoon before you could have your supper.

It seemed to them that the street-car company had the city wrapped up in a neat little package and that the populace might as well have been so many thousands of squirrels furiously operating treadmills. They estimated its profits in millions. As a matter of fact, its bonds sold at eighty. There was also an emotional basis for popular hatred of the street-car company. Most of these working-people had a rural background like my own. As a boy I had always walked wherever I was going. It was a slow, sweaty, and laborious procedure, but you were free. In town you couldn't walk because you'd be late, and the only way to hurry was to fork over your nickel. In expressing the common resentment against this change, Mike Callaghan expressed his own; he, also, had come out of the country.

His attitude toward the telephone company was also invariably belligerent, and in this he echoed the sentiments of his followers. Very few of them had telephones at that time. I think it was largely on that account that they liked to bait the company; the clients it served they classified as "the rich." Mike also aimed bricks at the gas and electric companies on every possible occasion. In these cases, also, I think the basis of his enmity was emotional. He and his crowd had grown up in the country, where one burned

wood. When you bought wood in a small town, you paid for the labor of cutting and hauling, but not for the wood; there was plenty of that. And if by any chance you could neither cut your own wood nor buy it, your position was still entirely different from that of a person who couldn't pay his gas bill. To be sure, you had no wood and no money, but you couldn't name the person who was withholding fuel from you. In town, however, if your gas was cut off, you knew that it was still in the pipes and actually in the house. It wasn't like wood that some neighbor would have to go and cut for you. It was already manufactured and on the premises, but you couldn't have it because your bill was unpaid. To withhold it from people many of whose fathers had paid their bills only once a year—well, times were changing and all of this was new and puzzling. A man's house was no longer his castle in the sense that a farmer's home had been. Everybody, of course, overlooked one vital point in letting emotion dictate this line of thought: cities were growing at the expense of the country because millions of people preferred to live in them; the country was still available, unchanged, and the roads back were wide open.

, Years later, European immigrants became an important element in the strength of our political machine, but at that time they were not sufficiently numerous to count. The thing that Mike had capitalized



in the beginning of his reign was the rural man's discomfort and resentment in a new environment that was satisfactory on the whole—certainly better than what he had left—but still less than perfect.

CHAPTER IV

In view of the fact that he was never on the side of the public utilities that were forced to deal with the city officials whom he controlled, you may wonder about the sources of his revenue. Bosses were generally supposed to levy toll and take bribes. Mike's revenue was never large; power, not wealth, was what he craved. Such money as he needed for himself and the organization came from three sources—liquor, prostitution, and gambling. Ours was a wide-open town. Though a large majority of the people who enrolled in his political organization led sober, decent lives, they believed, as Mike did, that a wide-open town attracted a great deal more trade than would otherwise have come. Commercial and industrial leaders were already becoming aware of the fact that our

own people furnished upward of ninety per cent of the business enjoyed by local saloons and gambling-houses, but the legend persisted that these establishments were patronized principally by visitors who, if they couldn't have a good time in our town, would trade elsewhere. Mike believed this implicitly. I think he would have been willing to repeal all of the restrictions, prohibitions, and regulations that were nullified in order to provide the wide-open town. Not being able to do that, he used his wits to bring about nullification by all sorts of evasions, and those who profited paid willingly whenever there was need for funds. They would have paid a great deal more if he had demanded more, but he was not grasping. He took what he needed.

I think I can say truthfully that, at the time I came under Mike's protection, the basis of his power was that he fought virtually every important force working for the upbuilding of the city and defended all of the elements that were incontestably parasites upon it. He was honestly mistaken as to which were which—that's all. And so was I. On the credit side of the ledger were only two outstanding items: he was vigorously in favor of public improvements, and the organization he built rendered valuable service to uncounted thousands of humble, useful men who could not have obtained elsewhere the simple, little helps that meant so much to them in their crises.

Stripped of all beclouding verbiage, that noisy cam-

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paign over the street-railway franchise resolved itself into a contest between two slogans: "Vote for and with the friends who don't forget you between campaigns," and "Vote for the growth and prosperity of this city." One, as you can plainly see, is warm and personal. The other is not. Nevertheless, we were by no means certain of victory. All that any boss may hope to hold in the hollow of his hand is the balance of power, never a majority of all the votes. The uncontrollable majority must divide, honestly, on the issues. Then he steps in and tips the scales. In that campaign the argument for a liberal franchise for the street-railway company was backed up by promises that touched men's pocketbooks. The company expressed eagerness to construct an entirely new line that would serve approximately five thousand people residing in suburbs just south of the city, but inside the city limits. Naturally this new line would increase property values.

One of our principal industries was a factory that manufactured doors, windows, window blinds, and similar standardized articles used in the construction of frame dwelling-houses. This factory needed a new site on account of its growth and had selected one out on the western edge of the city. If the street-railway company would extend its existing line one mile, that site would be available; otherwise the factory might move, either taking its two hundred and fifty-seven employees with it or abandoning them, jobless. An-

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other city had offered it a site, and a bonus to cover the cost of moving. Considerations of this kind were weighing heavily.

But even more important than the strong and appealing arguments for the franchise was a new election law that threatened to cause confusion among our voters, accustomed as they were to marching to the polls in platoons with their ballots already marked. Mike had first to create more of a division among the whole electorate and then to drill his battalions so that they could mark their own ballots. The opposition was counting strongly on the confusion that the new election law would cause.

CHAPTER V

When I brought my written analysis of the franchise issue to Mike's office, he banished everyone present and locked the door; it was never his custom to give his secretary orders to admit no one; his method was simple and foolproof. Even the secretary was banished. I pulled a chair round to his side of the desk and we went over the figures in the summary of what had been my beer-garden oration. Back and forth and back and forth we checked them. Mike was not an accountant, but he had a logical mind, and I had set down in arithmetic something that his agile wits had sensed without analysis. The essence of it was that the company could well afford to go ahead without better terms than those under which it was then operating; moreover, that the proposed improvements

would probably pay for themselves in about half the time the company alleged was necessary. Mike especially objected to a very long-term franchise; so this point was important. We spent three hours together before the whole matter was entirely clear to him. By "clear" he meant that he was then able to state the case, figures and all, without notes.

Finally he said to me: "I sent you some clients. How's business?"

"Better," I answered.

He unlocked the door and I knew that I was dismissed. "Tell the mayor to come over," he said to his secretary, and then to me: "We'll pound the day-lights out of that silk-stockings crowd, now that I've got their number for fair. That bunch of traction high-binders knows damn well that they're going to build those lines regardless. They're just trying to scare us, that's all. I'm going to unload a bomb on them that'll tear the seat out of their pants."

I went back to my office, tingling with pleasant excitement. If I hadn't made a success of my beer-garden speech, at least someone else was going to score a bull's-eye with the material. Mayor Drake, our candidate, knew how to make political speeches. It would be delightful to hear the crowd cheer as he expounded my arguments and blasted the opposition with my arithmetic.

Next morning the newspaper—we had only one morning newspaper—contained a page advertisement

which asked in box-car letters: WHAT ARE YOUR PROMISES WORTH, PERCY? The president of the street-railway company was named Percy Ball. Percy, however, was not called upon to answer this question. Mayor Drake, it appeared, would perform that service for him. There would be a mass meeting on Saturday night. All good citizens were urged to rally round the cause of civic welfare in the roller-skating-rink. Band music was also promised, but the main thing would be a sensational answer to the explosive question: WHAT ARE YOUR PROMISES WORTH, PERCY? Mike never overlooked an opportunity to have fun with the name Percy. Its owner, in this instance, was an electrical engineer six feet tall and hard as granite, a man who had set up machinery in some of the world's roughest places. But even Percy got off lightly as compared with Mayor Drake's opponent, William Farmer. William had had the misfortune, shortly after the campaign opened, to lose his house by fire. He himself had been rescued in pyjamas. The amused firemen had discovered that the pockets in his white linen pyjama coat were decorated with little edgings of pink silk. This important news item was immediately communicated to Mayor Drake, and thereafter he always referred to his opponent from the platform as Pink Pyjama Bill. The picture he thus conjured up was enough to nauseate honest icemen, brick-masons and locomotive firemen. Mike's

own ridiculous figure was unmistakably a political asset.

Needless to say, I was among the earliest arrivals at the skating-rink rally. I could hardly wait for Mayor Drake to speak. My speech! Well, he finally came forward carrying an imposing sheaf of papers in his hand. My figures! I leaned forward, afraid that I might miss a syllable. By way of introduction he read the question that he purposed answering. Then he announced that he was going to prove that Pink Pyjama Bill was "all balled up." This play on the name Ball brought a storm of applause and guffaws. Now he was ready to submit the proof. In his hands were the documents, and he proceeded to read and explain them. Our street-car company was owned by a holding company. Its officers could be fired as uncere- moniously as he could fire a city-hall janitor. The real owners of the street-car company were no more bound by what Percy Ball promised than he, the mayor, would be bound by the irresponsible remarks of a garbage-collector. That was all. He consumed an hour saying it, but that was the whole answer to the great question. And, as a matter of fact, it wasn't even half true. But the effect upon that audience and upon the campaign was terrific. Very few people understood the structure of a corporation, and Drake had made it appear that the holding company was a deliberate subterfuge.

I left the hall somewhat puzzled. Why hadn't he used my figures? On the following morning I addressed that question to Mike himself.

"Didn't I tell you that that speech of yours was no good?" was his answer. "Nobody can explain all that junk to an audience. That kind of stuff is for me, so I'll know what I'm doing. That ain't for the crowd."

As a matter of fact, Mike held all speeches—and speakers—in contempt. He had noticed that some mysterious quality in the tone of voice was more effective in stirring applause than what a man said, and he often remarked that if speeches alone were to be used in a campaign, he would place his bet "on the candidate who could yell the loudest."

CHAPTER VI

Open upon his desk, while we talked, was a ten-pound, leather-bound book containing the new election laws, and scattered around it several pages of pencilled notes. I judged, correctly, that Mike had been at work on the puzzling problem of how to mill his voters through the voting-booths so that they could leave behind them ballots that wouldn't be thrown out. The last legislature had enacted a law with the specific purpose of making it impossible for illiterates to vote. We had very few illiterate voters at that time, and Mike had carelessly failed to pay any attention to this legislation when it was pending, but there is a sort of no man's land between literacy and illiteracy very difficult to define, and many of Mike's cohorts lived in this shadowy realm. To put it briefly,

they could read, but without pleasure, and sometimes without certainty as to the meaning. Many of them were bright enough to understand lengthy and intricate verbal instructions, yet I have seen them study a medicine bottle thirty seconds before feeling convinced that the printed words "Dose, one teaspoonful in half a glass of water, after meals," meant exactly that. If they were going to vote under the new laws, they would have to read and understand about three hundred words of printed instructions at the top of their ballots.

Mike had no intention of seeing them crushed under any such brain-paralyzing task if he could save them. Our previous election law had provided that the voter should make a little cross before the name of the candidate for whom he wished to cast his ballot. The new law provided that he should draw a line through the names of the candidates for whom he did not wish to vote. Previously it had been possible to make one mark at the head of a column of names and thus vote a straight ticket. Now there was only one column and the voter would have to pick out each name. Under the circumstances it seemed more than ever advisable for the organization to have someone on hand at each polling-place to mark the ballots, but this was no longer allowed. The voter had to mark his own ballot. Also, it was illegal to possess a sample ballot. It was even illegal to loiter about the polling-place. And the slightest error in marking a ballot

made all of it void. Mike saw plenty of trouble ahead.

By way of drawing him out, I asked if he thought the new law would cause the organization any difficulty. His answer was an angry snort. He had been working on the problem ever since the campaign opened, he finally admitted, and unless some infallible means for instructing his voters were found, there was no chance to win. Glancing at the papers scattered over his desk, I noticed a yellow sheet from a scratch tablet on which he had pencilled a column of capital letters as follows:

S
P
I
N
R
U
T
O
N

“What’s that?” I asked, and he chuckled.

“I thought that was sure-fire,” he said, picking up the page and holding it before me. “Look here; reading from the bottom up, that spells ‘No Turnips.’ Wouldn’t you think anybody could remember that? Well, if you take those letters and read from the bottom up of your ballot, you’ll see that each one in order is the first letter of the name to be scratched. Simple, eh?”

“It looks to me as though you’d done it,” I commented. “All they have to do is remember ‘No turnips,’ and then we don’t have to violate the law by giving the voters anything in writing.”

“It’s no good,” Mike growled. “We tried it out and it takes nearly half an hour for them to mark their ballots. Not only that; about one out of five starts at the top, and when he does that he simply scratches our crowd to ribbons. There’s another blowhole, too. The R doesn’t work. Our man for city assessor is Ramsay, and theirs is Richardson. They’ve got to remember to scratch the top R. So it’s no good.” He picked up a blank ballot that had been face down on his desk and pointed out the two names, Ramsay and Richardson.

Knowing the election law intimately, I had to smile at this flagrant infraction of it; the law specifically provided that all ballots were to be counted by the printer, the count to be verified under oath, and no ballots to go astray. Possession of this ballot was a misdemeanor punishable by fine and imprisonment. It had not previously occurred to me, however, that such a law simply couldn’t be enforced, since public printing was awarded by favor. Of course, Mike would have sample ballots! I laughed inwardly at my own innocence. And while I laughed, I had an inspiration. One handful of those ballots in advance of the opening of the polls would be sufficient to win the election. The plan popped into my mind complete

in every detail. I wondered why it had not occurred to everyone long ago, especially to the legislators who framed this law.

"Listen," I said. "Give just one blank ballot to each precinct captain and have him on hand near the polling-place when the polls open. He can mark this ballot and give it to the first voter of our crowd who appears. This voter will tuck it into his inside pocket and then get a blank ballot from the election officers when he goes to vote. He will go into the voting-booth and remain long enough to count fifty. He will also fold the blank ballot, tuck it into his inside coat pocket, take out the marked ballot, and, on leaving the voting-booth, present it to the election officers. Then he will go back to the precinct captain and give him the blank ballot. The captain will mark this ballot and give it to the next voter. That's all there is to it."

Mike blinked several times while passing this performance in review, then laughed. "I'll be damned!" was his comment. "Kid, I've been working on that puzzle for six weeks. It makes me sore as a boil to think I'm not bright. Now get out of here just as fast as you can. I've got to call in every precinct captain in town and give him a blue print and a drilling."

There never was an election law that can't be beat, and I doubt that there ever will be. The opposition lost many a ballot because of the confusion among all classes of voters, but I doubt that we lost as many as

ten. We won the election by a majority considerably larger than we could have mustered except for that new law.

The complete success of my plan was alone enough to assure my future with the organization, but Mike now confronted the street-railway-franchise problem under the heavy responsibility attaching to the office of dictator. It was politically necessary and emotionally delightful to curse and threaten the company publicly, but silly to do it any real harm. In steering this course he wanted me and my arithmetic handy, but along with the franchise negotiations came new and still more engaging fights. Without realizing it I was hitched up for life.

CHAPTER VII

The conferences in which we worked out the details of the new franchise for the street-railway company take high rank among the many funny sessions it has been my pleasure to attend. Both of the high contracting parties came to the conference board armed with a pair of deuces and ready to bluff valiantly, but even more ready to concede almost anything the opposing side might demand. Under the able management of Percy Ball the street-railway company had already done so well that it could concede a great deal in order to continue growing with an obviously prosperous and expanding city. Ball felt that it was absurd and unfair for the city to make stiffer terms for a renewal of the franchise, but it was his duty to seek protection by compromise for the large invest-

ment already in existence and hope for better luck in the future. As boss, Mike Callaghan knew it would eventually be disastrous to his political machine if he crippled the company, and yet it was necessary to make hostile demonstrations. We had elected Mayor Drake on a platform of opposition to the company's proposal for renewal of the franchise on liberal terms, but we had offered no program of our own. Thus we were pledged to insist upon stiff terms, but between ourselves we didn't really know what would constitute stiff terms. We had to grope our way inch by inch and keep the other side talking while we sifted their remarks in search of clews.

Mayor Drake, of course, was just a figurehead. It wasn't up to him to know anything about franchise terms, and, believe me, he didn't. On that subject his innocence was unassailable. Without help at his elbow every minute, he would have been lost, but he always knew how to make the right gesture in an emergency, so he announced that a committee of four distinguished citizens would be appointed to advise him and, of course, to hear everything that was said. The negotiations should not be secret. The latter point was what interested the public, and its reaction was entirely favorable. Next he suggested that Mr. Ball should nominate two members of the committee, and again the reaction was favorable. Ball named the general attorney for his company, and Mr. Farmer, the defeated candidate for mayor. Drake named Mike

Callaghan and me. That was my first appearance as a public figure and paved the way for my election to the state legislature, and eventually for my succession to Mike's throne.

When the five of us gathered in the mayor's office, Drake presiding, everyone turned to Callaghan for a declaration that would form the basis of negotiations. There was not even a pretense that the mayor counted, in spite of the fact that he would utter the final decision. It also amused me to observe how completely the city-council members had been left out. Everyone knew that they would vote as directed. In those days a boss was a boss and wore his crown in public.

"This franchise," Callaghan boomed, "is worth one hundred thousand dollars!" Percy Ball nearly collapsed. That was vastly more than the company could pay, and to him it meant a disastrous end for his year's work. Callaghan, although scowling belligerently, was really watching Ball like a cat at a rat-hole. The game was on and this was his first bet.

"We can't pay that," Ball said in a low tone. "We couldn't pay even one-fourth of that. If you have nothing better to offer, we might as well adjourn."

"Do you mean to say," Callaghan growled, "that a franchise isn't worth money?"

"I don't see that it is," Ball answered. "It's merely a permit to do business."

“Nothing of the sort,” Callaghan retorted. “It’s a monopoly. That’s the kind of a permit it is.”

“Well, do you want three or four different companies’ car tracks on our main streets?” Farmer asked.

“That isn’t the point,” Callaghan answered. “The point is that a franchise is a monopoly and it’s worth money. It’s worth at least one hundred thousand dollars—probably twice that.”

“Do you mean that we ought to pay that much annually for permission to operate?” Ball asked, fairly stunned. Callaghan didn’t answer at once. He was sizing up his man. Percy Ball was absolutely honest and by nature frank. This kind of game brought him no joy. Callaghan quickly sensed this fact and respected Ball for it, but he had to fight on until he could grab a clew to the right amount.

Sparring for time, he asked curtly: “What do you think I mean?”

“If the one hundred thousand dollars is a lump sum for renewal of the franchise and could be paid in annual installments over the life of the contract,” Ball suggested, “I could answer more easily. All would depend then upon the length of the franchise. We asked for twenty years, and you have said that that is too long. What do you think would be right?”

“Ten years,” Callaghan snapped. Ball seemed to stand up under this announcement without undue shock. I judged that it was about what he had expected. As far as Callaghan and I were concerned, that

settled the matter of the length of the franchise; we would stand pat for ten years. On every point we had to feel our way in just this manner.

The company's annual report had just been issued, so we decided to have it read and explained by the general attorney. Callaghan and I knew what was in it just as well as he did, but we wanted to hear his explanations and see if we could pick up any more clews. After an hour and a half it seemed fairly clear that an additional tax of ten thousand dollars a year would not bankrupt the company; moreover, if the proposed new lines paid as well as expected, this sum would soon be relatively slight. And if anything went wrong with our calculations, we could reduce the assessed valuations of the company's physical properties and thus make a satisfactory rebate. By five o'clock in the afternoon we knew pretty well what we could safely do, but it was far, far less than what Callaghan had hoped for. He wanted something spectacular, figures that would reverberate. Ten thousand dollars would be a juicy addition to the city's treasury, but politically it lacked everything. We adjourned for recess with the understanding that we would meet again at three o'clock on the following afternoon. As we emerged from the mayor's office, newspaper reporters demanded statements.

"The mayor will give out the news," Callaghan announced, "and the rest of us have nothing to say."

That was more than agreeable, so we signified the

fact by nodding. Callaghan strolled out of the office, down the corridor, and suddenly disappeared, although I was following him, not more than twenty paces behind. I waited for him fully ten minutes at the elevator. Finally I saw him come out of the private rear door to the mayor's office, and I knew that he must have gone back to prepare Drake's statement.

Next morning I read in my newspaper:

"As mayor I take the position that the street-car company's franchise is worth two hundred thousand dollars. They have never paid a cent for it, but they will in the future. The representatives of the company have not agreed to this figure. Today's conference reached no conclusion. Sessions will be held daily until the franchise terms are agreed upon."

Callaghan and I met at his office just before three o'clock on the following day and together walked to the city hall.

"What do you hear about the mayor's statement?" he asked. And then, before I could reply: "Isn't it a peach?"

"Well," I said, "it's making all kinds of a hit with the people, but I hope we aren't riding for a fall."

"We aren't," he answered, and grinned.

"If I were in your place," I told him, "I'd have figured out a plan that wouldn't call for an inch of compromise."

“That’s what I’ve done,” he said. “We’re not going to compromise.” Plainly he didn’t care to disclose his plan. Knowing the depth of his animosity toward the company, I feared that we were in for serious trouble, possibly disaster. In view of my hopes for a seat in the legislature, the outlook troubled me. Callaghan, however, was in high good humor as we entered the second conference. I can summarize that session by saying that we simply got nowhere. The only important development was that Ball and Callaghan became personal enemies for the first time, although, during the campaign, they had pommeeled each other without gloves.

Ball was no novice in dealing with public officials; consequently he had never considered the exchange of insults, incident to a campaign, personal. As for Callaghan, hardy old veteran that he was, the last thing that would ever have entered his mind would have been resentment because of the barbed remarks hurled at him. But during this second session Ball made it clear that he considered Callaghan the most inept boss he had ever met, and that struck Mike right where he lived. From that moment on, the war was personal. At the close of the session Mayor Drake again gave out a statement to the press saying that he insisted upon two hundred thousand dollars for the franchise, but that the company did not agree. I could see that this was the picture of the fight that the

public would receive. Callaghan believed in eliminating details when he addressed the public and making every issue as simple as black and white.

Three more afternoons were spent in bickering that often wandered miles away from even the subject matter, much less the points at issue, and at the close of each session Mayor Drake reported that there was no progress, but that he was standing pat on his original terms. Newspaper readers would necessarily see three men on one side of a table and three on the other, glaring at each other for two hours daily, merely repeating in louder tones what had already been said. But the public liked that.

"Isn't that just like old Mike?" was my barber's comment. "He's a bulldog, old Mike is. The company might just as well come through. He'll never let up on them."

That seemed to be the general opinion, and even those who weren't pleased admired Mike for his stubbornness. After five deadlocked sessions, a week-end intervened, but when Monday came, we again gathered in the mayor's office.

"It's about time we got down to brass tacks," Callaghan announced impatiently. "You fellows might as well understand that we aren't going to compromise on a valuation of two hundred thousand dollars for that franchise. There's no use talking about that any more. The next question, then, is the tax to be levied on that valuation. I don't think it would be fair to

levy the same rate on a franchise that we levy on a physical property. It ought to be much higher. In fact, my recommendation would be five per cent. Now there's something to discuss. What do you say?"

Ball gulped. This was the first intimation that the two hundred thousand dollars was a mere valuation. Five per cent of two hundred thousand dollars would be ten thousand dollars. Mike had worked his way back to the original figure simply by making the larger sum a valuation to be taxed instead of the tax itself. I don't think I ever saw a quicker decision. Ball and his attorney agreed to the figure at once. We simply took the existing franchise, wrote in this new provision in one short paragraph, and handed it to Mayor Drake without recommendation. The session lasted forty minutes and everyone present went out victorious. Mayor Drake wrote finis to the episode with a brief statement for the press saying: "The company agreed to my figure of two hundred thousand dollars' valuation for a ten-year franchise, and it will be granted." Politically, Mike had won a smashing victory; financially, the company had come off far better than Ball had dared hope.

On our way back to his office Callaghan said to me: "I've got that outfit, now, right where I want 'em. The valuation of the franchise is fixed in the franchise and can't be changed for ten years, but the tax rate can be changed every year. We can twist the tail off Percy some day, if he makes it necessary. Do you know what

he's doing? He's getting a committee of snoopers together. They're going to clean up our town. Yeah. Going to bring in some detectives and show the awful relations between me and vice. Damn fool! He'd be doing a lot better for himself to hurry along and lay that new track."

"Don't you think it's funny," I asked, "that he and his general attorney didn't spot the loophole in the franchise terms and try to nail down that tax rate of one-half of one per cent, so that it wouldn't be raised later on?"

"Aw, they spotted that," Mike answered. "Sure, they spotted that. But they're expecting to get rid of me pretty soon. We're going to have a cleaned-up town and I'm going to be run out of it. Wouldn't that curl your whiskers?"

CHAPTER VIII

In spite of Mike's scornful attitude toward the impending clean-up campaign, however, I could see that he was giving it serious consideration. There was danger ahead, and he was never the man to try to banish it by whistling. If an absolutely honest and absolutely secret ballot could have been taken suddenly, without a campaign, to determine whether we should continue to have a wide-open town, I am certain that the voters of that day would have returned a majority for gayety and sin, but no referendum is ever taken in any such manner. Men would be called upon to step out in the open and declare themselves. Under these circumstances not less than seven out of ten would go on record in favor of strict law-enforcement.

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In the sort of campaign that Percy Ball and other prominent citizens were planning, no balloting was proposed, but when their finance committee solicited funds, he would be a brave, not to say foolhardy, citizen who turned them down. With money available they could employ detectives from other cities to gather evidence. In view of the abundance of evidence available, no one in his right mind could fail to foresee what an ordeal the jurors before whom these cases would be tried must confront if they were unwilling to convict the defendants. Even disagreements would be out of the question, much less acquittals. And yet Mike knew that if he could defeat the reformers by whatever means proved available, a very large percentage of the population would be silent or pleased. And the others would let the matter drop after the usual brief flurry. There is in most good citizens a tremendous amount of lukewarmness and carelessness. These qualities are what the boss capitalizes.

For two weeks an amusing game of hide and go seek was played in our local underworld; the visiting detectives busied themselves spying upon gambling-houses and trying to identify the proprietors, while our local police endeavored to identify the unwelcome visitors and spy upon them. Neither side had a very difficult task and both, I judged from the reports Mike received, won victories daily. Gambling was wide open, anyone could enter its palaces, and no one need have wasted time asking their locations, for

they were the best-lighted places in the city. Similarly the bawdy-houses proclaimed their district.

One of the most active and keenest of the invading sleuths proved to have an unsavory record, including two convictions for perjury. The police looked up these men's records as fast as they were identified. Mike waited as long as he considered safe and then disclosed these records through intermediaries to Percy Ball. Two of the detectives with blemished records were dropped and all of their work had to be done over again. Another was neatly trapped in a brawl staged for his benefit, and slugged. That retired him to a hospital for the duration of the war. Nevertheless, the committee continued doggedly toward its goal, and evidence was piling up. To my amazement, popular as well as financial support rallied to the committee. Although Mike had just finished one drama in the rôle of hero, he was now rapidly assuming the rôle of villain. Ball's original plan had been for the detectives to do their work secretly, but when news of their presence in the city leaked out, it was received with favorable comment by prominent men and the press. We had hoped that the drift of opinion might be unfavorable to the whole enterprise, but now we saw that it would not. The time had come for action.

Mike and Mayor Drake and the chief of police and I went into conference one afternoon in Mike's dingy private office. Something had to be done without much

more delay, because the evidence gathered would probably be presented to the next grand jury. It would convene on the following Monday, four days hence.

"The thing to do," Mike said, "is beat them to it. If our people want a closed town, they can have it. They don't have to send to Russia for Cossacks. We can do that little job with home talent. We don't even need the grand jury. Gambling is a misdemeanor, not a felony. No indictments are necessary. Let's just go out and raid all these places, drag in the guilty culprits, and tell them they can either plead guilty or we won't let them run any more. Some of them are crooked, anyway; they ought to be closed for keeps. The chief knows which ones are the worst. What do you say, chief?"

You will doubtless observe the conflicting statements in Mike's proposal—namely, that we were to have a closed town, and, in the same breath, that the gamblers must plead guilty "or we won't let them run any more." The explanation is that Mike couldn't imagine a permanently closed town. He had never seen one. Any variation from wide open seemed to him necessarily a temporary arrangement. Taken at their face value, his remarks appear to contain nothing more than a suggestion. As you have just read them in print, they probably do not indicate that grave events were impending. As I listened to him, however, I detected a new note in his voice—one I had never heard before, although I heard it often enough

later. It was a sinister note. Mayor Drake's expression, which was usually jocular, changed suddenly; the muscles of his jaw knotted and fright peered unsteadily through his eyes. I knew that he loved gambling and enjoyed the company of picturesque gamblers. Evidently there was something more unpleasant in store for them than Mike's simple words indicated to me.

Hinkley, the chief of police, guffawed, but I noticed with amazement that he guffawed nervously. He was a barrel-shaped man, strong as a stevedore, with an expansive face of well-seasoned red, a stubble of iron-gray hair, and pleasant, brown, pop-eyes that looked out upon a thoroughly amusing world. He was quick to laugh, famous as a good fellow, fond of cards and horses, wine and beefsteak, but at bottom utterly cruel, a weirdly primitive person who belonged to the thirteenth century. I have seen him laugh uproariously at a clubfooted Negro beggar. Deformity of all kinds amused him.

His noisy guffaw was sufficient answer to Mike's question, but he added a hearty: "Correct as hell."

"How long will it take you to get ready?" Drake asked.

"Do it tonight," the chief grunted.

"Tonight?" Drake queried. Plainly, haste was not what he wanted.

"Sure," said the chief. "We don't need no time to get ready. We ain't out for evidence. They

got to plead guilty. That's the idea, ain't it, Mike?"

"That's it."

"All right, then," Drake said, with resignation, "tonight."

"Tonight," the chief repeated, and Callaghan nodded vigorously. Even he now seemed a trifle nervous. All three of them were nervous, and I kept wondering why. This was an aspect of municipal affairs that I had never before encountered; therefore I had no way of knowing how much these men could communicate to each other without the use of words. But I was soon to know more about these matters.

When we rose from our chairs, the chief said to me: "Go to the Palace tonight at ten o'clock."

"What for?" I asked.

"Witness," he grunted.

"I didn't know you were going to need witnesses," I said.

"May be some trouble," he explained. "Just stand around; keep out of the way and see what happens. If anything happens, you'll testify, and all you've got to do is tell the truth regardless. That's fair, ain't it?"

I turned to Mike with an expression that must have screeched "Oh, spare my cheeild!" because he laughed. It was not a pleasant laugh, however. Then he nodded a firm approval of the chief's request. I had my orders, and that settled that. At least it would be interesting, and I must confess to a normal amount of curiosity.



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## CHAPTER IX

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The Palace was the largest and most ornate gambling-house in the city ; it was famous throughout the state. Its three proprietors boasted that the city had grown up around their establishment, and they were not far from right as a matter of history, though what they meant was that without gambling there wouldn't have been any city. Theirs was the first local telephone subscribed for, the first order for installation of electric lights ; and in the barroom they exhibited the first cash register purchased in the city. Some twenty years earlier it had been the custom for farmers, cattle-raisers and business men from neighboring cross-roads villages to leave their money and valuable papers in the Palace safe, rather than take them to a bank. In view of all these traditions, the proprietors

of the Palace regarded politicians and peace officers with contempt. They bribed the sheriff—to the extent that he needed bribing—by inviting him to dinner occasionally and giving him expensive Christmas presents for which, as a rule, he had no use. Mere constables could not muster sufficient courage to enter the place; its painfully brilliant lights made them appear clownishly shabby. Policemen regarded it as a historic landmark in which the city took pride. Mike was not dazzled by the Palace, but he had never succeeded in obtaining from its proprietors a donation to his campaign funds larger than five hundred dollars, which was the standard contribution for gambling-houses half its size. Others gave gladly, even cringingly, but the tailored and manicured lords of the Palace tossed out their donations as though they were bones for a stray dog. Mike had accepted them without comment for years; he was a master of biding his time.

Promptly at ten o'clock I strolled into the gaudy lobby of the Palace and tossed some coins to the two crippled beggars standing there. Downstairs there was a large restaurant—the best in the state—also a bar-room with three bartenders always on duty. A stairway twelve feet wide led to the upper floor and the games of chance. This was an enormous room, housing ten tables for dice games, twenty tables for card games, six roulette wheels, two billiard tables, and four pool tables, besides other paraphernalia which

I could not identify. The building was only two stories high, covered with a flat tin roof. I wandered from table to table, glancing at each game just a moment; what I was really doing was looking for a safe place for an innocent bystander who might be caught in the disorder of a raid. The room was fairly well filled and no one paid any attention to me.

Lookout men, employed by the house, were also wandering about, glancing at the various games. They were experts in detecting fraud. I noticed that all of them were armed, but, for that matter, so were the card dealers and those who presided over the roulette and dice games. It was the boast of the management of the Palace that a schoolboy could play there without being cheated. Finally I found a place that recommended itself by offering cover, and lingered there sipping a glass of lemonade. The big clock over the manager's desk said ten after ten. I judged that I should not have to wait long. For five minutes I watched the stairway, expecting each moment to see a crowd of blue uniforms.

Presently I became conscious of a rumbling noise overhead—a noise somewhat like thunder. Others began to notice it also. The lookout men glanced nervously at the ceiling, wrinkled their brows, and squinted their habitually strained eyes. Watching for marked cards must be one of the world's least desirable occupations. Regardless of age, all of them had crow's-feet around their eyes. Jim Blatchford, the proprietor then

on duty, left his desk and whispered to one of the lookout men, who hastened to the stairway and disappeared. The noise overhead now increased in volume to such an extent that I could guess the cause of it. There were men—not less than ten, I estimated—walking on the flat tin roof. The lookout man returned from his errand and hurried to Blatchford's desk. Blatchford pulled a switch and darkened the room for the merest fraction of a second in order to stop all play.

"Attention, gentlemen," he said in a calm voice. "Cash in your checks, please. We are going to be raided. There's plenty of time, so don't leave your hats or coats. Anyone who comes in here before these chips are cashed comes over my dead body. Take your time."

Fully half of those present left at once without cashing their chips, but they didn't run. The clatter of chips being counted rose from every table. Blatchford summoned five men to help him redeem them. Their fingers moved with magic speed. Another fifteen seconds and the job would have been completed, but it was interrupted by the crash of axes striking the wooden ventilator. This simple contraption was merely a square box that rose four feet above the roof; its slatted sides permitted the fog of cigar smoke that rose from the gaming-tables to float away. As the axes crashed against these brittle slats, a shower of splinters descended into the room. This pre-

cipitated a stampede. By the time the second shower of splinters fell, all of the customers were gone. Some of them left their chips; many left their hats. A dozen gamblers employed by the house hurried toward the cloakrooms to take off their working-coats or aprons, or both, and put on their street attire. Three or four others came out of the cloakrooms, running. The lookout men loitered, or strolled toward Blatchford.

"Stand by here, men!" roared Blatchford. "Do you think I'm going to surrender all this money to a gang of thieving cops? Grab your guns and stand by, I say!" Most of the gaming-table attendants continued running, but the lookout men rallied round. Trouble was their job, and panic a sensation they knew very little about.

Another crash of axes demolished the ventilator completely; instantly a stepladder slid down.

"The first man who shows himself is a dead man!" Blatchford shouted. "If you want to come in here, you come through the door!"

Why they hadn't come through the door in the first place puzzled me even in the midst of the excitement. It was wide enough to accommodate an elephant.

"You're under arrest, all of you!" a voice shouted from the roof.

With sickening anxiety I saw a pair of shoes, then the blue trouser legs of a policeman's uniform, appear on the top rung of the ladder. Blatchford took careful aim and fired just as his two partners came running



up the stairs with pistols in their hands. The blue uniform dropped to the floor and bounced two feet. It was a dummy stuffed with straw. While it was still falling, the ear-splitting roar of a shotgun filled the room, and Blatchford sagged to the floor, clutching his forehead, where the whole load had taken effect. The lookout men and Blatchford's two partners then opened a fusillade on the hole where the ventilator had been.

Suddenly I heard the bull voice of the chief of police at the head of the stairs. "Put up those guns!" he ordered. "You're under arrest." I turned and saw the ugly barrels of eight shotguns resting on the top step. Just the forehead of each of the policemen behind those guns was visible. They were lying down on the stairs, and were thus entrenched. I couldn't see the chief at all. Firing stopped immediately. "Put your guns on the floor!" ordered the chief. The gamblers did so reluctantly. "Now, then, come on over here and line up!" Ten minutes later they were being marched to the city jail, five blocks away, handcuffed and roped together. I hurried to Blatchford as soon as the gamblers had grounded their arms. He was dead.

"Well," the chief said, wiping his forehead and sighing, "did you see Blatchford fire at that uniform?"

I nodded. Then he nodded and walked away. As my nerves became calmer, the purpose of the exotic details of this raid became apparent. Blatchford had sim-



ply been framed. By chopping their way through the roof the police had chased away all of the customers before coming to grips with the management of the Palace. Not only that, they had also got rid of the house employees who would run. There remained then only the die-hards who held the police in contempt, and these were the ones destined for the chastening experience of handcuffs and jail. They were captured with no witness present besides myself. I don't think there is much doubt that the chief had also planned to kill whichever one of the three proprietors happened to be on duty. They were high-spirited men and he must have known just about how they would behave. For his purpose his plan was entirely adequate. Blatchford had fired point-blank at what he supposed was an officer of the law. To return the fire would be held lawful. The plain blunt truth about what had happened would exonerate the man who fired the shot—and I may as well say right now that it did. He was not even indicted. When, and if, the Palace reopened its doors, its proprietors would know who was boss and that they operated by his permission. When next they were invited to contribute to a campaign fund, they would show better manners, and more generosity, too, no doubt.

While I pondered these matters, Mayor Drake came in and went immediately to the roulette tables. He and the chief uprooted one and began to explore its

inner mechanism. From their conversation I gathered that the mayor had often "bucked" this game, to use his own expression, and now was consumed with curiosity to know whether the game was honest. They found that it was not. I am unable to pass upon their testimony, but both of them seemed to know what they were doing and agreed on their findings. Later the chief told me that he also found loaded dice and marked cards among the equipment of the Palace. Men are strangely romantic about their vices. The reputation of this establishment for sterling integrity exceeded at that time the standing of any bank in the city. Its honesty had become a legend.

But there have always been such legends about violators of the law and I have no doubt that they will flourish forever. Nobody questions the fact that gambling is a cruel sport, likely to spawn cheating, but its devotees always know someone who, although he makes his living at it, is nevertheless the personification of honor. We are romantic about our vices—usually to avoid admitting that we are fools.

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## CHAPTER X

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Investigation of the equipment of the Palace was finally interrupted by a telephone call, summoning the chief of police to confer with the sheriff; both the city and the county jails were filled to capacity, though prisoners were still being brought in. The jails had not been empty, however, before the raids took place. All of them netted only one hundred and seventeen prisoners. Most of the raids had been conducted by only two or three officers, who entered politely through the front doors, stopped play, presented their warrants, and left after making sure that the houses were darkened. They didn't even put their prisoners under bond, but permitted them to go home. Five establishments only had been scenes of disorder. Shots had been fired in three besides the Palace. To the gambling

fraternity these proceedings were crystal clear. They knew which places had paid as little as possible, or paid unwillingly. Only these had been wrecked. They also knew why Jim Blatchford had been riddled with buckshot. But the public did not, and neither did Percy Ball or the members of his committee. To them this night's work was a complete mystery. Their whole campaign was wrecked.

The gamblers could have explained everything to them in one minute, but why should they? Needless to say, they never did. If Percy Ball and his committee could have shown that Mike Callaghan collected graft from gambling-houses at regular intervals, they would still have had a case to present to the grand jury, but no such evidence was available, for the reason that Mike did not operate on that basis. He merely solicited campaign funds and took whatever was given without complaint. As matters stood on the morning after the raids, every gambling-house in the city had been closed, one hundred and seventeen men had been imprisoned, and one of the proprietors of the wealthiest, largest, and most impudent of these establishments was dead, shot by a policeman.

Mike had done precisely what he set out to do—beat them to it—and they were not shrewd enough to know that he now controlled gambling as he had never even tried to control it before. For the detectives employed by Percy Ball's committee to present their sketchy evidence to the grand jury would have

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been ridiculous. The whole job had been completed. Nothing remained to be done now, from Mike's point of view, but wait patiently until the visiting detectives were dismissed. Ball was a canny person; he kept them a full month. If he had kept them two months, the gambling-houses would have remained closed exactly that long, but it was difficult for the committee of reformers to raise funds with no fireworks in prospect. After thirty days the invaders departed and the gambling-houses reopened their doors; however, they burned fewer electric lights thereafter.

That this would be the net result of the raids Mike knew from the beginning. What troubled him immediately after that hectic night was how to handle the deluge of misdemeanor cases on the dockets of the three local justices of the peace. I have dealt here only with the gambling cases, but the red-light district had also been raided at the same time. Our machine controlled one of the three county courts, but we had never paid much attention to justices of the peace. As a matter of fact, no one controlled them, although there was a county ring almost as powerful as our city machine. Mike often invaded county politics and always had a toe-hold, at least, but precinct offices had never before assumed much importance. Now he would have to ask these justices of the peace to impose heavy fines on the gamblers in order to keep up the appearance of absolute sincerity.

Mike called the three justices into conference at

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nine o'clock. Their courts were due to open at ten. He told them, briefly, that he hoped they would impose fines of not less than twenty-five dollars, preferably more. The legal maximum was one hundred dollars. They were opposed to such heavy penalties on the ground that custom dictated the minimum fine when the defendant pleaded guilty in a case that did not involve violence. They had no reason to support Mike's political fortunes; moreover, they did not regard these defendants as morally guilty. It was a difficult situation for Mike because, secretly, he agreed with the justices of the peace. Some way had to be found to make his interests their interests. The man who can't turn that trick will soon cease to be a boss.

Mike readily found a way. Justices of the peace and constables were paid under the fee system. Mike suggested that they could make out a bill for costs in each of these cases that would include the following items: summoning a jury, summoning three witnesses, mileage in reaching the witnesses, one day's court attendance for the constable, one day's court attendance for the prosecutor, the usual fee for the justice himself for trial of a case. In short, they were to make out the complete bill of costs for a thoroughly contested case the trial of which consumed a day. This bill would amount to twenty-two dollars and fifty cents. Add to it a fine of two dollars and fifty cents, and the desired total of twenty-five dollars was attained. The same method could be used in the cases from the red-light



district. The state would receive only the two dollars and fifty cents, and the rest would be distributed in fees. In view of the fact that all these fines would be paid immediately in cash, these fees would be a succulent item.

Mike's counsel prevailed. When the gamblers came to court, their bills were awaiting them. Each entered his plea of guilty and paid what he assumed to be his fine. No one questioned the proceeding or asked for an itemized statement. The public was satisfied, the gamblers were satisfied, and Mike was thrilled with the prospect of consolidating his power on a much firmer basis by getting control of these relatively unimportant offices. With the three justices of the peace under his thumb, he would never again have to confer with the sheriff on the subject of an open town. He had often fought for control of the sheriff's office and lost every time. There had never been any danger that the sheriff would inflict a closed town upon us, but as long as he had that power, his claim to graft was as good as Mike's, and there had occasionally been heated discussions on this point, usually ending in a compromise by which both collected. Mike considered these compromises very unjust, though he never explained why beyond saying that the burden upon those who paid was too heavy. Obviously the thing to do was to capture those three little courts, which really had no business existing in a large municipality, because the justice of the peace and the

constable are distinctly rural institutions. There they serve a useful purpose. In a city they ought not to be elective offices, because scarcely one voter in ten pays any attention to them. Not only did Mike see how they could free him from all need for diplomatic relations with the county authorities, but he had also caught a new vision of their meaning in terms of revenue. Before the day was over, we had begun to lay our plans for the coming county and precinct elections. And, believe me, they were novel plans. It was this campaign which laid the groundwork for the important part we were soon to play in state affairs.

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## CHAPTER XI

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Our first move in preparation for the coming county and precinct elections was to outline an elaborate plan for street paving. "Complicated" would be a better descriptive word for this plan, because political considerations dictated all of its details. At that time no street in the city had been paved continuously for a distance of two miles, nor did we intend to bring about any such Utopian condition during the coming year. Better political results could be obtained by scattering our paving work far and wide through the residence districts in little patches of three to ten city blocks' length. The immediate effect of each patch was to increase property values and make it easier for a home-owner to dispose of his investment if he so desired.

Naturally such bounty from the city government was appreciated. In fact, it brought results even beyond each patch of asphalt or brick, because of the probability of later extensions. On the basis of no more than three blocks of paving one could make promises that extended for five blocks in both directions. Being a shrewd boss, Mike Callaghan knew how to make these promises in strictly confidential interviews and get the most out of them. He kept his pledges, though not always promptly.

In the business district he waited for pressure to be brought before agreeing to any public improvements. After a committee had presented a strong case, he would agree to use his influence with the mayor; invariably it would be discovered that there was not enough money available. The committee would then offer to assist with donations and assessments, whereupon the work would be done. The business men, Mike had found, expected things from the municipal government and made their requests with confidence. Mike didn't like that. He thought they ought to petition, humbly, hat in hand, and finally, when they got what they wanted, say: "Oh, thank you, kind sir!" That was about what he made them do. On the other hand, home-owners, he had discovered, expected nothing but taxation from the city government; consequently they were delighted when announcements appeared in their newspapers that they would soon enjoy excellent paving without having petitioned or

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exerted any influence whatever. Naturally, their conclusion would be that the city government must be honest and actuated by sound principles, since it thus placed the stamp of approval on the home-owners' faith in the future of the neighborhoods in which they had invested. The automobile was not at that time important enough to demand long stretches of paved highway, so Mike's system worked very well. Also, he was peculiarly honest about his interest in street paving at a time when all of our boss-ridden cities wasted millions on what they were pleased to call "street improvement." He held slipshod work in abhorrence and always insisted on not less than six inches of first-class foundation, which was then judged to be an assurance of permanence. Nevertheless, he lived to see every inch of that paving crumble under the pounding of what would now be regarded as rather light trucks. All of the work had to be done over again within a few years.

He could have made this work pay a heavy toll of graft, as I later did, by controlling certain companies and then seeing that they got the contracts, but Mike considered such arrangements rough. He insisted upon city employees doing the work; no contracts. I think he really had a passionate interest in sound paving, and since his way of obtaining it did not diminish his political power, he indulged his whim. He and I never did agree as to the proper sources of revenue. He had no objection to levying upon gam-

bling and vice, while I hated it. For a boss to clip off a commission for doing sound work such as paving seemed to me reasonable and to him dishonest. Paving dollars were consecrated, as he saw it, while the others were fair game—being wasted, anyway; so let any man who could, grab and hold them. In short, he represented the regime of bossism that was about to pass into history, and I represented its next phase.

Our reason for an orgy of street paving just at this time was to expand the city pay roll and thus have plenty of manageable voters available for the county elections. The street-car company began work on the proposed extensions of its lines as soon as the new franchise went into effect, and we felt that we ought to match that force, spade for spade and pick for pick. Though the company would not be interested in county politics, Percy Ball, its manager, had during the recent mayoralty campaign formed political alliances that he could not easily throw over, and we assumed that he would be drawn into the county campaign either willingly or otherwise. He still wanted to get rid of Mike, so why shouldn't he trade with candidates for county offices, giving them his support now in return for theirs at the next municipal election? Our guess as to what he would do proved to be correct.

Mike had always made it a rule to launch public works shortly before any election in which he was interested, and after I succeeded him I followed the

same rule. There is an ancient legend to the effect that political bosses obtain their power or preserve it by distributing fat jobs. Nothing could be further from the truth. Fat jobs are a liability and a nuisance; consequently there are relatively very few of them. What a politician wants at his disposal is a large number of just any kind of jobs. Every well-paid appointive office makes at least three enemies to one friend for the harassed executive who distributes patronage, and unless he is a good diplomat, there may be ten enemies, all recruited out of the ranks of former supporters. If I could saddle upon any officeholder from President to mayor as many fat appointments as clerkships, I believe I could wreck his administration and end his political career. All our various governmental units—national, state, county, and municipal—pay niggardly salaries to the few highly skilled men they must employ. It is extremely difficult to obtain appropriations for adequate salaries for engineers, physicians, judges, and scientists, and almost impossible to raise them, no matter how necessary; but it never has been hard to make the wage scales for laborers and clerks in the public service higher than those prevailing elsewhere.

The reason for this, it seems to me, is obvious. The public employee has only one vote, no matter what his salary. As for the votes he can influence, a day laborer will, as a rule, go to more trouble to reach his relatives and friends than would a five-thousand-a-

year man. The number of men and women on tax-supported pay rolls has increased enormously during the past quarter of a century, but not one out of a thousand has a fat job or even one with an attractive future. However much money we are wasting through the excessive number of these petty political jobs, the greater waste is man power. Thousands of these people who receive just enough to wriggle through their monthly bills are too good for their jobs and under the pressure of necessity would soon be doing something far more worth while.

When I was a boss, we got very little strength from patronage in the form of white-collar jobs. Laborers were our principal dependence, and while we probably built wastefully, at least we built something. The passion for governmental regulation, inspection, and advice came later. We built things.

CHAPTER XII

With our paving plans agreed upon and the money available to carry them into effect, Mike waited patiently for Ball to show his hand before undertaking any political trading on his own account. He had always traded in county elections, because the city machine was not powerful enough to dominate them. There was a strong county machine, and after having learned by experience that he couldn't beat it, Mike contented himself with making such dents and cracks in it as opportunity allowed, thus preserving himself from having to face a united enemy if it should ever be tempted to turn upon him. Our strategy was simply to wait until Ball decided whether he would support the ins or the outs, and then hasten to the other side. Victory or defeat would make very little differ-

ence, just so we came off the field with plenty of friends. Fortunately, trial by ballot doesn't kill anybody; the man who runs and loses lives to run again; likewise, those who voted for him live to vote again.

A fact very much in our favor this time was that the only offices we really wanted to capture were three obscure little justice-of-the-peace courts that no one suspected us of coveting. Those we were determined to have. Our biggest problem remained precisely what it had been in the last municipal campaign—namely, the election laws. We had beaten the new election laws by a subterfuge and given Mayor Drake a second term, but we knew that the same trick wouldn't work again. Our own precinct captains had been too delighted with that trick to keep their mouths shut, and now everybody was on to it. As a matter of fact, every precinct captain in our organization could have been sent to the penitentiary for our clever evasion of the new election laws, but for some mysterious reason the American public scarcely ever pursues election frauds until they are dragged before the grand jury. Money is spent freely just before every election to prevent fraud, but there seems to be an unwritten sporting rule: "If you get away with it, all right." We had sent our voters to the polls with marked ballots—a plain violation of the law, punishable by imprisonment for one year. They failed to detect the trick on election day, and therefore they

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did nothing, even after they had found out how we managed to obtain and mark those ballots.

I never have understood why the public-spirited men who put up money and take a keen interest in elections drop the subject so suddenly on the day after the ballots are counted. Most of these men are good citizens, deeply moved by anxiety for the public welfare; but when they lose, they go home and forget the contest, as though it had been a football game. If they are fighting a political machine, they usually know that there is danger of ballot-box frauds and they try to prevent them, but that is far from easy. The man who is trying to do something always has a tactical advantage over those who are trying to prevent him, and no political boss that I have ever known anything about managed to rule for many years without finding it necessary to cheat on election day. The only way to stop him is to hang on to him like a bulldog and prosecute to the limit. A few operations of this sort would do more toward cleaning up machine politics than the election of any candidate I have ever heard of.

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### CHAPTER XIII

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Having found the new election law an extremely difficult nut to crack, we began laying our plans to get rid of it. The scheme by which we had broken through its meshes couldn't be used again, because some busybody might search a few of our voters before they entered the booths and discover their marked ballots. What we wanted was a new law. Fortunately all the municipalities in the state held their elections on the same date at that time, and quite a number of politicians had found a way to put something over. As a consequence, every legislator had a drawerful of proposed amendments, either offered by his constituents or of his own concoction. Wherever people vote, there is blind and foolish faith that a crook-proof election system can be devised. Take it from



me, there isn't a chance! Not so long as the penalties for crookedness are not enforced!

Some of these amendments were being offered by politicians who had failed to break through the new law. That was the most amusing feature of the hue and cry, because these fellows were the loudest of all in their demands that the law be improved. With both those who had been disappointed because the law failed and those who had been even more bitterly disappointed because it proved a success howling for changes, the governor was forced to call a special session of the legislature.

As soon as it convened, there were so many amendments available that the prospect for chaos seemed bright. Mike watched developments complacently. Any change suited him, either in the form of amendments or in the form of a new law, and chaos better than either. Mike had made his debut as boss in the colorful days when the only qualification for voting was to be a male person apparently twenty-one years of age and present in the voting-booth. He had imported voters from alien counties and villages up to fifty miles away and gallantly stood ready to do so again. The only election law that had ever had him groggy, he once told me, was a regulation, suddenly adopted by a committee of armed vigilants after the polls opened, that men whose clothes were soaking wet couldn't vote. Mike had drained the southern part of the county of its manhood for that city elec-

tion and marched his alien hired hands into the city on foot; unfortunately it rained and they had had to ford a stream neck-deep. The resulting wetness of their clothing raised suspicion as to their place of domicile. The other side had brought its extra voters in on flat cars and had them nice and dry and ready for action in the packing company's cattle pens. Mike equalized matters by turning in a fire alarm and giving the opposing Hessians a shower bath that restored democracy by making all questionable voters look alike. After proving himself equal to that emergency he had never again doubted his powers.

At the end of ten days of jockeying and oratory it seemed highly probable that the legislature would bring forth such a patchwork of amendments that Mike would be able to drive a circus parade through it, but this brilliant prospect was suddenly challenged one afternoon by a queer old senator from a rural county whose hobby had been election laws for more than twenty years. His name was Barlow and he was a grain-buyer in a tiny village at the end of a spur line of railroad. I remember him as made up largely of whiskers, in which were embedded a pair of steel-rimmed spectacles that were always so dusty I used to wonder how he could see through them. I also remember his tight, shiny, black shoes, which had no shoe strings and no opening of any kind in front. I couldn't understand how he had ever managed to get into them, until I discovered that the narrow strip of

cloth running up and down each side was elastic. He introduced a bill providing for an entirely new election law and made a speech explaining its advantages. As a matter of fact, he had been doing this at every session for many years, but his voice didn't carry more than thirty feet, and few of the members had ever given him their attention. After hammering away at this subject for the greater part of his mature years, he now got his first respectful hearing. Mike sent for a copy of his bill and we studied it together. Mayor Drake and the superintendent of streets and bridges also studied it. Then the four of us went into conference in Mike's funny little private office with the worn-out rose-colored carpet.

"Well?" Mike rumbled, looking at me.

"I think it's a stem-winding terror," I said. "It's got all of the provisions of the present law to keep our workers away from the polling-places, prevent marked ballots, assure an honest count. In addition, there's a poll tax of two dollars. Our fellows can't pay two dollars for the privilege of voting. That's a whole day's wage for unskilled labor. What's more, they've got to register and pay the tax three months before election day; that means before we've put them to work. If we don't beat that bill, we're up to our eyes in grief."

Mike grunted. And to my astonishment it was a negative grunt. He didn't agree with me.

"Well?" he said, and this time addressed Mayor Drake.

“What the devil is a poll tax?” Drake exclaimed. “I never heard of such a thing.”

“Neither have I,” Mike answered. It was the first time any of us had heard of the poll tax, although several states were then collecting it.

“I don’t believe it’s constitutional,” Drake said.

Mike laughed. “What difference does that make?” he grumbled. “If it isn’t constitutional, we’ll get another law before the next election, and that suits me fine. What I want to know now is how to get all of our fellows registered. And that’s all I want to know.” He turned to Ledbetter, the superintendent of streets and bridges, and repeated his: “Well?”

“A lot of our boys would have to borrow the money,” Ledbetter answered. “I don’t see how we can lend it to them. Not that far ahead, anyway.”

Mike rose, fairly bristling. “You’re a bunch of rummies!” he stormed. “What’s the matter with your brains? This is the best law for us that I’ve seen in six years. All on earth I’ve been planning to do in the county campaign is elect three mangy little justices of the peace. You know that, all of you. But if we can get this Barlow bill passed, I’ll grab the whole courthouse. That’s what I think of it. Now put your wits to work and figure out where our boys are going to get their two dollars in time to register. That’s the only catch in the whole law. Two dollars isn’t a national bank. If we can’t figure out two dollars apiece for those lads, we’d better quit politics and go home

and churn the butter. That's all." The conference was over. Three of us slunk out, whipped and miserable.

On the way back to my office, however, the point of Mike's argument became clear to me. Barlow's theory of the tax was that it would be certain to eliminate the illiterate riffraff and gang voters, and he had therefore restored to the ballot the old system of party names and party symbols at the head of columns. One could again vote a straight ticket if his bill should pass. Mike had wanted that more than anything else, because almost any voter can be told how to vote a straight ticket. The hardest election law he had ever faced was the one that provided for only one column on the ballot and the names of all candidates for each office grouped under the title of that office, with nothing to indicate which crowd any candidate belonged to. That sort of ballot made it necessary for the voter to remember as many names as there were offices to be filled. It is about the most difficult obstacle an illiterate or only partially literate voter can face.

Regardless of a man's literacy, however, he has to give some attention to the campaign to use that kind of ballot intelligently. There were thousands of prominent citizens who wanted to get rid of it, and Barlow had reluctantly acceded to their demands. In the greater part of the state it actually had eliminated the illiterate vote, but few champions rose to acclaim this success, because so many other voters had found



themselves no less confused than the illiterates. They hadn't given sufficient attention, and when it came time to mark their ballots, they couldn't remember which were friends and which enemies after the first two or three offices at the top. However, in spite of the importance of getting rid of this troublesome arrangement and restoring the grand old straight ticket that is such a help to machine politics, I was uneasy about the poll tax. Two dollars would be a lot of money for our crowd. Nearly all of the bosses and professional politicians were frightened stiff. Urgent appeals for the defeat of the Barlow bill were being sent to the capitol from many back-room political headquarters, but when Mike was asked by a reporter for an expression of opinion, he boldly announced that the bill seemed to him more likely to protect the purity of the ballot than any other he had ever read. In his interview Mike announced that he would not presume to advise the learned legislators and that he had sent no communication of any kind on this subject to the capitol. He merely hoped that the special session would bring forth the best election law ever devised, and wished to express his confidence in the wisdom and integrity of the men now at work on the task. That must have been very puzzling to Ball and his political associates, because they were quick to see the advantages of the Barlow bill and were supporting it vigorously.

In the legislature the enemies of the Barlow bill



maneuvered themselves into a jam. They had begun by howling for a stricter and better law, and now they were confronted with one that every honest reformer supported. The only way to escape it was to amend the existing law, and all attempts in that direction led to disastrous compromises. It was impossible to stop with two or three good amendments, because in order to muster the necessary votes for their adoption their sponsors had to allow at least twenty-five more. Finally everyone had to turn to the Barlow bill in order to prevent the thirty-day session from ending in a failure which the public would interpret only too accurately. Despair, revenge, and disgust animated about half of those who finally voted for the bill, but it carried overwhelmingly. Moreover, the emergency clause was attached and it went into effect thirty days after the governor signed it.

As soon as I read the news I telephoned Mike and suggested that we hold another conference.

"No!" he roared. "I've figured it out myself! Everything's fixed."

Temporarily my standing with him was still ten degrees below zero; nevertheless, he arranged for my name to go on the ballot as a candidate for the lower house of the legislature. I wondered at the time whether he really meant that he was going to capture the county or whether he intended for me to get a thorough drubbing. I knew that he had done such things.

Immediately after the Barlow bill became a law, Mayor Drake called a meeting of the city council and introduced an ordinance prohibiting the employment by the city government of any man who was not a bona-fide resident. Since it was a matter of common knowledge that all of the city employees were bona-fide residents and always had been, this ordinance was regarded along Main Street as simply one more of Mayor Drake's amusing political gestures. Nothing but superficialities ever engaged his serious thought. The order of march for a parade would keep Drake awake all night, while a new sewer system would have seemed to him something kept in stock by the local plumbers. He was always introducing silly oratorical resolutions. This one brought the usual indulgent smiles, except in the outlying wards, where the little frame houses rented for ten dollars a month. There hundreds of sunburned, horny-handed citizens immediately wanted to know what "bona fide" meant. They felt reasonably sure that they were citizens, but were they bona fide? And if not, how would one go about correcting the error? There was street paving to be done pretty soon; they knew that because election day was only six months off. How about this bona fide, and where could it be obtained?

For deep questions of this sort the proper oracle was the precinct captain. It developed that he not only knew where and how one could become bona fide, but he could also suggest an easy way to meet the

payments. Bona fide was for sale in the county clerk's office under the name of poll tax. It would cost two dollars. And the way to get the two dollars, if you didn't have it on hand, was to approach your grocer, saying: "Very shortly the city will begin paving on a large scale. I shall then have steady work. I shall be a better customer. I shall catch up with my bills. But in order to obtain this work I must become bona fide, and that costs two dollars. Please lend me the two dollars. Just add it to my bill and let me pay it back piecemeal." If anyone who made this plea failed to get the two dollars, I have yet to hear of it. Never before in the history of our city were so many day laborers qualified to vote. Everyone who entertained even a faint hope or fear that he might possibly draw a laborer's pay from the city during the coming year paid the tax. As job insurance the two dollars became a reasonable premium.

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## CHAPTER XIV

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The press could not fail to observe these men standing in line day after day in the county clerk's office. They were the first to come, and during the first two weeks the only ones who came. Presently there was a great clamor and much spilling of printer's ink to arouse the rest of our citizenry. I think it dawned upon them for the first time that they also would have to pay that two-dollar tax in order to become qualified voters. Up to that time the two dollars had always been referred to as a sum that undesirable voters would not pay; never as a sum that the others would pay. Suddenly each of those dollars became as big around as a harvest moon. Tax dollars always are. Men who had made a moral issue of the Barlow bill while it was pending, and classified politicians as hon-

est or dishonest according to whether they were for or against it, now began to remark one to another that voting was a service to the state and not a special privilege for which they could be charged a fee. Elderly gentlemen of a stubborn turn of mind took pride in remarking that they stood ready to bear arms for their country, but they wouldn't pay tribute in order to exercise their inalienable right to vote. I heard at least five men solemnly declare that they had cast their last ballots. I often have wondered if men ever live up to these solemn declarations. If so, there must be hundreds of men who quit voting after each of William Jennings Bryan's various defeats and thousands who quit when woman suffrage was granted. I personally heard not less than twenty men say that, so far as they were concerned, the women could do all the voting henceforth. I am inclined to doubt that these grouches are long-lived, but frankly I don't know.

Nearly everybody finds that going to register is a boresome task under any circumstances, but our citizens had never previously been asked to register long before the first campaign brass band had blared its call to duty. They broke down under the strain. To become qualified voters without knowing who the candidates would be, and, moreover, to have to pay two dollars for this pig in a poke, simply bogged them down in lack of interest. Briefly, the poll tax law worked out backward, which was exactly what Mike

had thought it would do. Ten days before the registration books closed for the year, the number of qualified voters was small enough to become a scandal. The press abandoned its preachments on the duties of citizenship and made the much more interesting statement that unless at least five thousand more citizens paid their poll taxes, no stranger would believe that ours was the largest city in the state. That appeal brought thirty-five hundred patriots to the barrel head with their two dollars. Then the books were closed. Only thirty-five per cent of our otherwise qualified voters would be able to cast ballots in the coming election.

Mike looked at these figures and said: "What did I tell you?"

These were the net results of the Barlow bill, which represented the life-work of an honest, studious, patriotic man, convinced to the point of obsession that political morality could be restored by a statesman's election law!



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## CHAPTER XV

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Crops were good that year, and so was business. When the time came to begin our street work, the foremen reported that the usual mobs of applicants had not appeared. No doubt this was excellent news in most quarters, but it certainly wasn't to me. I wanted to go to the legislature. We had been clever enough to make qualified voters out of all the teamsters and pick-and-shovel chauffeurs in town, but a lot of good that would do if they didn't need city jobs. For anyone who hates a humdrum existence I can certainly recommend practical politics. Nothing ever stands still in that game.

"What do you think of this?" I asked Mike one day when we were arranging speaking dates for our candidates.

“Pretty sweet, ain’t it?” he said, beaming. “I don’t think I ever had so much good luck. Do you know what’s happened now?” I shook my head. “The frogs and switches for Ball’s street-car track are delayed. He won’t be fairly started until about two weeks before election.”

“Well,” I said, “that’s soon enough, isn’t it?”

“No, not this year,” Callaghan answered. “By that time we’ll have every loose bona fide in town on our pay roll and he’ll have to import labor. That’ll just about let him out.”

I understood then why the street work was being pushed ahead as rapidly as possible two months before election day. We were getting all the voters while the getting was good.

Ball and his crowd elected to support the outs in the county campaign. Reformers have a natural inclination to do that. I never have seen them trade with the ins for what they want, although it is often possible. Moreover, the ins usually have an advantage. Mike waited until a few of the ins came to him, and then agreed with them that it would be good strategy on his part to oppose the group Ball supported. He was quite casual about it. I wondered why, because it seemed to me an excellent time to show them just how strong he was and exact pledges that would result in a merger of the county and city machines.

We started campaigning exactly five weeks before election day. Two weeks after the start some of the

outs were secretly making overtures to Mike, because Ball's support was beginning to look rather shaky; the city pay roll had now been expanded to the extent of eleven hundred and fifty-three names. Ball had only three hundred and seventy-seven. He assured his political associates that he would soon be ready to go ahead very rapidly, but it was plain to them that the floating supply of labor had been fairly well taken up. When this situation developed, the ins came to Mike again. This time he clamped down on them. They had to promise everything but their shirts.

The campaign itself was far from exciting. Ball and his crowd tried hard to make a paramount issue of their demand for a closed town, but their candidates balked and evaded. They wanted to leave the way open to trade with Mike if Ball and his crowd fell down. None of them favored a closed town anyway. All of us spent most of our time hand-shaking. I had no issues to present; therefore when I spoke I devoted all my time to praising the other candidates on our ticket. Being an unknown man myself, I thought it a good idea to borrow as much as I could of their friendships by flattering them. Anyway, I went into the campaign labeled "a friend of the plain people," and the other candidates seemed to me sufficiently plain to have a claim on anyone who unfurled such a banner. On the whole, the scheme worked excellently.

I spent most of my time out in the rural parts of

the county, as the other candidates also did; the committees, managers, and machine were depended upon to take care of the city.

On the fifth day before election I returned from one of these wandering tours, tired, needing a bath, and two days behind with my shaving.

"I think we're going to get a fair break in the country," I told Mike; "so I guess everything's all right."

"Like hell it is," he said. "Listen to me. We've got to get busy before dark. You go to Ledbetter—"

"Not until I get a bath and a shave," I interrupted.

"No shave!" he shouted. "Bath, but no shave! Listen! You've got to go to Ledbetter and get a pick and shovel!"

"For heaven's sake!" I exclaimed. "What are you talking about?"

"Go to Ledbetter and get a pick and shovel," he roared. "Ball and his highbinders have put one over on us. I thought something was wrong a week ago and I told that feather-brained fool Drake to look out, but you know him. We'd been picking up about five to ten laborers a day for two weeks, and then all of a sudden here come eighty-three. Next day ninety-seven. Then sixty-four. See what that means?" I didn't and said so. "Ball is unloading his men on us. He can't get enough to match us—has to import 'em by the hundreds—so he turns his three hundred voters loose on us to say a little piece to our voters—a little piece that he taught them. They're scattered all

through our gangs telling our fellows that the city work will slack off right after election, but the street-car work will just be getting good then. If they'll vote right, he'll kick out the aliens and give our bona fides the preference. There's too much prosperity loose around this town this year. Some of the boys are getting out of line. What do they care for us when they can get jobs all over the lot?"

"But where do I come in with a pick and shovel?" I asked.

"We're short of spies, you rummy!" Mike roared. "Where's your brains? Only five days to spot no one knows how many traitors! Now, don't shave, and do what I tell you. Go to Ledbetter and he'll give you a job. Put a smear of axle grease or soot or something on your face. Nobody knows you anyway. Keep that beard. You look like a train-robber right now. Get into one of these gangs and find out who's going to vote yellow. Understand?"

I understood. Also, it was clear that we had no time to waste. On the way to Ledbetter's office, however, it occurred to me that even if we identified all of the traitors, we couldn't very well shoot them. They'd still be bona-fide voters. But you could generally trust old Mike to know what he was about, so I dismissed the inquiry. At two o'clock that afternoon I became one of the friendliest, most talkative, laziest laborers who ever soldiered on a job. When the six o'clock whistles blew—they were six o'clock whistles in those



days—I had the names of three traitors. The following day I was assigned to another gang and gathered four more names.

Going home that evening, I read an interesting item in my newspaper. Mayor Drake, it appeared, was very angry because the street-car company had been forced to import laborers. He was not angry with the street-car company, however, strange as that may seem. This time—amazing fact!—he was angry with our own working-people. The lazy wretches were not even applying for jobs, according to Mayor Drake. On the contrary, they were sitting round home, basking in luxury, spending their savings and wasting their time. What an outrage! said Mayor Drake; and how would they have the nerve to ask for help next winter when work was slack? Shame upon them! And not only shame, but the law upon them, too! Mayor Drake was going to give them just a few days to heed his warning, and then, if they persisted in their sinful course, he would instruct the chief of police to spread the well-known police dragnet and gather in these vile wretches on charges of vagrancy. They could either go to work or get out of town. Everybody knew that jobs were available. He himself would promise a street job to every bona-fide resident who would apply. This outburst struck a responsive chord in the heart of every little corner retail merchant groaning under a load of small credit accounts. It was cheered also in the larger marts of trade along Main Street. And none



cheered more sincerely than the laborers who were sweating over pavements and street-car rails. Men so employed have little sympathy for idlers. As far as I knew, I was the only person who laughed. I read in Drake's typically flamboyant statement the strategy of wise old Mike. I could guess what was coming and I was not mistaken. Still, Drake was never more typically himself than in that statement. Another of his gestures. If I had had energy enough left, I think I should have laughed aloud, but these were strenuous days. After ten hours of standing in the street pretending to work, I had to hurry home, clean up, and then rush to my office for political conferences. Also I had to manufacture endless lies as to where I had spent the day.

On the eve of election I thought it advisable to have one more talk with Mike, so I telephoned for an appointment.

"Come about midnight," he said, "or any time after that."

I arrived at midnight. There were three policemen just ahead of me and we made way for three others hurrying out. I found the chief of police in Mike's private office. The two of them were leaning over a type-written list of names and addresses. It seemed to be about five or six pages. Mike had placed check marks after nearly all the names. I recognized his check mark, being familiar with it.

"What's going on?" I asked.

“Nothing now,” Mike answered, grinning. “Everything’s all right. The chief’s made a neat job of it. All cooped up and no squawks. Ledbetter tells me you were the best man he had on the job. That’s what I like about you. You do what you’re told and no high-and-mighty stuff. Tomorrow night when the polls close, you look in the mirror and you’ll see a member of the next legislature.”

My guess about the meaning of Drake’s threatened raid on the unemployed was correct. It was now in progress and being handled just as I had suspected it would be. Mike didn’t have to tell me the details. I could guess the one he left out. Ledbetter had fired all of the traitors, and then the police had promptly arrested them on charges of vagrancy, because they had no jobs. They would spend election day in jail. The next day they would be released. And that was precisely what happened. Ball and his crowd woke up to the trick about noon of election day and began to bombard the police department with writs of habeas corpus demanding the release of these men. But there is red tape attached to such procedure and they did not rescue more than twenty-five in time to vote. Quite a number of the prisoners appealed to our precinct captains. These worthies, having been given their cues in advance, rushed to the jail, snorting, protesting, and threatening on behalf of their abused and innocent friends. They promised quick release and swore that there would be no trials and no fines.

They'd go to Mike himself if necessary. Well, they kept their word. Every prisoner was released as soon as the polls closed.

We elected every man on our ticket. The county machine now belonged to the city machine. This meant that in state affairs we should be able to deliver one of those brutal majorities that so often give one or two counties control of the governorship. I had long known that if Mike ever captured the county, he would go after the state. Well, we went after it.

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## CHAPTER XVI

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No Atlantic liner ever put to sea with its course more definitely charted than mine was when I presented my certificate showing that I had been elected to the lower house of the legislature. To acquire power is, of course, the usual objective of politicians, and mine was no exception to the rule; but when I say my course was charted, I mean that I had studied the problem, sought advice, and worked out a definite program of procedure. First of all I determined to introduce no bills embodying drastic changes in the state laws. A man can commit himself to some pet theory and wear himself out in what amounts to nothing more than propaganda on behalf of his notion of how something or other ought to be regulated, suppressed, or encouraged. As likely as not, time and its

changes will either solve or wipe out the problem before he can make his bill a paramount issue. Meanwhile there are certain bills of tremendous importance that simply must be passed at every session; I decided to devote all my attention to these. At the head of this classification is the appropriation bill. No matter how ably or badly drawn, it eventually must be passed; therefore to participate in drafting it confers much power.

Next I decided not to seek prominence as the spokesman of any party or faction. The bitterness born of the spirited rivalry for this position always has a tendency to reduce its power below what it is assumed to be. Moreover, we had at that time a four-cornered fight. So did many other legislatures. The real issue was between prohibitionists and anti-prohibitionists, though the politicians tried to pretend that party divisions were more important. As a matter of fact, they had almost ceased to exist. Every political faction comprised both drys and wets, and a dry Democrat felt closer to a dry Republican than to a wet Democrat. I determined not to ally myself very closely with any group involved in such confusion. This course was made fairly easy for me because I had not been elected on my own strength. I had simply been pitchforked into the legislature by Mike Callaghan's machine, almost without a platform; and no matter what I should elect to call myself, everyone would know what I really was—

Mike's henchman. Any distinction I gained would have to come from personal ability, and not through loyalty to a faction. I should be classified, I knew, as an anti-prohibitionist, and on test votes I would stay with my crowd, but I need not go out of my way to thumb my nose at the dry members. As long as I voted right on the more important tests of strength, Mike and the machine would feel that I was staying put, and that would be sufficient. A seat in the legislature is usually of very little importance to a political machine, anyway. At the time of my election my position was not nearly so essential to Mike as control of the three local justices of the peace. Through them he maintained his strangle-hold on the peace officers and could decree a wide-open town. This, of course, was the source of his revenue. Unless I went out of my way to make a fool of myself—and even then I should have to do something spectacular—I was certain of re-election as long as Mike remained in power and I remained in his good graces.

I saw many advantages in this situation. In the first place, it was not necessarily humiliating to be known as Mike's henchman, because local bosses often went out of their way to elect men of outstanding ability to the legislature. This was sound practical politics. It gave them valuable figureheads to show off in time of need. My fellow members would have to look me over to determine whether I was a lame duck of the machine or part of its distinguished camouflage.



I had only one extremely important, specific objective toward which I determined to work constantly, and that was to become the governor's friend—not his spokesman, but the member he would ask to look after bills that were not platform demands. A governor needs much help of this kind and it often comes from someone who is not an outstanding partisan. Every legislative body from Congress down has members who are scarcely ever in the newspaper headlines, but whose ability to get their bills passed makes their friendship highly desirable. That was the position to which I aspired. Someone else could be the governor's spokesman on the floor of the house, because it would be impossible for me to know whether I was going to support the governor for re-election or not. That would rest with Mike—and Mike was an opportunist.

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## CHAPTER XVII

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I went to the state capital three days before the legislature convened, in order to enjoy the campaign for the speakership. The campaign necessarily opens ahead of the session, because the election of a speaker is the first important business taken up. There were four candidates, two labeled Republican and two Democratic, but actually this was not the division at all. If it had been, it would have been silly for each party thus to split its forces. The actual division was absolutely logical. One of the candidates was a dry wet—that is to say, he represented a city constituency that was overwhelmingly wet, and therefore he ran as a wet, but he would not drink for moral reasons and was, at heart, a prohibitionist who had many warm friends among the prohibitionist members. The

second was a wet dry. His political power in the little county seat which sent him to the legislature had been won long ago, in the days when there was a saloon for every three hundred and fifty of the population. Finally that county voted itself dry under the local-option law, and promptly he became a prohibitionist. His dry constituents appreciated this and his wet friends winked knowingly. He was an enormous man, with staring eyes and a florid complexion, in which brick-red blended with a tinge of purple; and, to make the comedy complete, he wore the name of Darling. The other two candidates were a dry who was really dry and a wet who was fanatically wet. Neither of these had a Chinaman's chance to be elected. I became convinced of that after my first twelve hours in the capital.

The logical supposition would be that I favored the fanatical wet, since I came from one of the wettest communities in the state; actually, my position was no less amusing than Darling's. I knew that Mike and my constituents would expect me to use my best endeavors against what they always called the witch-burners, but personally I had none of the enthusiasm engendered by an emotional reaction to the prohibition issue. The son of a small-town school-teacher, reared in a community that had voted itself dry while I was still in knee pants, I had never drunk intoxicating beverages except experimentally, and then they had made me ill; so I never experimented again. If I

could have waved a magic wand and banished alcoholic beverages from the earth, I might have done so, just as an experiment. They meant nothing to me in terms of personal enjoyment, and, still more important, I had not seen any of the havoc they were reputed to have caused. The issue remained abstract to me.

However, I represented a wet boss and a wet constituency; therefore I became just as absurd as the rest of them—I was a dry wet. To have no better explanation of my position than the other straddling, floundering politicians seemed to me intolerable; so I began to study it from the point of view of a lawyer and a law-maker. I was—and still am—deeply impressed by John Stuart Mill's essay *Liberty*, setting forth the proposition that there can be no crime until one man has injured another. If he injures himself, that is his own misfortune and not a subject for legislation. Likewise if he injures his dependents, that is fate; society cannot really protect a wife and children from a husband and father, no matter how resolutely it tries. The number of statutes in which this impossibility is attempted amazes me. The relations between husband and wife, and parents and children, are so much closer, for both good and evil, than those between the state and any individual that it is impossible for the state, through any agency thus far devised, to intervene with much effect. About the only thing the state has ever done is to give the

weaker members of the family group almost, but not quite, the same measure of protection against violence that it affords the entire community. To put the matter more specifically, the sheriff may prevent a man from beating his wife or child to death with a club, but no arm of the law can make him divide his earnings justly with the family, nor can it make him earn if he chooses not to. Neither has it ever succeeded in preventing him from abandoning them, for the simple reason that if abandonment is a crime, then the reasonable punishment of it is imprisonment: and they are still abandoned. Moreover, after passing all of these profitless laws the state itself will admit the unsoundness of the theory upon which they are based by sending a forger to the penitentiary in spite of the fact that he has a wife and eighteen children who will suffer far more than he. What else can the state do? But if it is right in exacting its penalty in this case, it might omit the pious sniffing on the other occasions and admit that liberty means the right to destroy yourself just as well as the right to realize the best in you.

The argument that gives your neighbors—that is to say, the state—the right to prevent you from drinking alcoholic beverages because there is a certain amount of danger that they will do you harm must give your neighbors the right to prescribe the rest of your diet and your religion also. Indeed, if the imposition of prohibition is defended with logic, I don't

see how any logical person can escape the conclusion that the imposition of a state church is a solemn duty. I do not believe that the more enthusiastic believers in the promotion of welfare by laws have overlooked this point nor that they disagree with me in the slightest. I firmly believe that, given the opportunity, they would impose a state church—that they have been prevented thus far only by disagreement among themselves. I think they are more consistently logical than even they realize. That is why I am afraid of them and the mistaken premise that started them originally on a course of public policy diametrically opposed to the liberal principles that gave birth to our government.

The idea of the state as wet nurse, and inanimate things as the real criminals, is what produces our disgusting annual deluge of legislation. Most of it is silly twaddle. No other country has such an idea, and no other country has such a deluge of foolishness.

Some day, unless we return to sound principles of law, we shall learn too late that we have smothered all law under the deluge of legislation that has been pouring forth in ever-increasing volume for the past quarter of a century. The one sound principle I have recommended would by itself cut off nearly all of our unenforceable laws. You cannot have a crime without a victim. There is nothing new in this; in fact, I should hesitate to say how many centuries old it may be. But it is absolutely sound. During my entire legis-



lative experience I turned to it again and again for guidance.

Knowing my personal habits, the drys persisted in believing that at almost any moment I would join them. As a result our friendly discussions in hotel lobbies and at the dinner table turned very often to this subject. I recall with special interest Jake Hodgson, a member from a rural county, who was as frank and honest a man as I have ever known. He was a prohibitionist who had arrived at his convictions by logical processes. "I drink," he said, "but I don't see that that has anything to do with it. I am sorry that I drink. I don't approve of drinking. I use my will to the very best of my ability to keep from drinking, but about once a month the craving for alcohol gets the better of me, and when it does, I get awful drunk and make a fool of myself. Afterwards I am sick and remorseful. It seems to me even more natural for a man who drinks as I do to be a prohibitionist than for a man who is a teetotaler, especially if he finds it easy and natural to be a teetotaler. The final answer to this whole problem from both a moral and a legislative point of view is to be found in the Bible in one sentence: 'Am I my brother's keeper?' You can't get away from that argument, can you?"

"Yes, Jake," I answered, "I can. I don't see how the idea that each of us is his brother's keeper ever managed to become so general. I find no authority whatever for it in the Bible. Let's go over that short

passage in which the words occur. Cain had killed Abel. He is about to be accused of the crime. A preliminary question is put to him: Where is Abel? And, being sunk in guilt, he must reply evasively: 'Am I my brother's keeper?' The answer is obviously and inescapably 'No.' That's why he used the phrase. Evidently sensible people even at that early date had long known that you aren't your brother's keeper. As I understand his answer, it was uttered simply as a convenient truism that might save him from further investigation.

"If a man had just robbed the First National Bank and, while hurrying away, found himself confronting a curious citizen who asked: 'What just happened down there at the First National Bank?' it seems to me that he might answer haughtily: 'Am I the president of the First National Bank?'

"But we have managed to twist and interpret that passage until I am under the impression that a great many Christian people believe the answer to Cain's question is also in the Bible. They evidently believe that the next line is: 'And the Lord said: "Yes, young man, you are your brother's keeper and you ought to be ashamed of yourself for not knowing it. I shall speak to your Sunday-school teacher about you at once." ' Christian people have less trouble with their Bible, I observe, than any others. They simply believe that everything they believe is in The Book and rarely read a line of it. My estimate would be that less

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than one professing Christian out of seven in this country has what might fairly be called a good knowledge of the Bible. We are not our brothers' keepers. That would be impossible.

"Until we quit pretending that we are, we shall continue to be pestered by unenforceable, silly, expensive laws. I do not see how any intelligent person can fail to reverse that challenging question 'Am I my brother's keeper?' and then see what he thinks of it: 'Is my brother my keeper?' If he is, you are most assuredly his slave. But let me call attention to another important aspect of that question: Cain really was Abel's brother, so the word 'brother' in the quotation means exactly what it says, 'brother.' But we interpret it in such a way that everybody in town is my brother. . . . I doubt that my responsibilities extend that far and I most strenuously object to the moral responsibilities of so many people overshadowing me."

Jake was amazed by the novelty and fascinated by the bold wickedness of this argument. It struck him as clever, but at the same time satanic. It was no more convincing to him than a feat of parlor magic would have been. Indeed, he regarded it as precisely that.

Time after time his basic test for legislation brought us into conflict on pending bills. He introduced our first measure regulating automobile traffic, providing speed limits, and so on. The object of it was to prevent accidents. He was going to tell everyone exactly how to drive, what was safe and what wasn't.

“Jake,” I said, “you can’t do that. The way you’ve drawn that bill, if you happen to be driving your car thirty-one miles an hour on a safe, open road, with the car under control, and I come along in my car at five miles an hour, not knowing how to drive, or for any other reason driving crazily, and you hit me, you would be at fault because you were exceeding the speed limit of thirty miles an hour. I would enter a plea that I was going only five miles an hour and fasten the blame on you. What we ought to have is a simple little statute fixing penalties for reckless driving. Experience and the courts will build up a solid body of decisions defining reckless driving, and changing the definition whenever the facts change. We don’t really know that thirty-one miles an hour constitutes reckless driving.”

I was arguing at the time for an amendment to his bill, making automobile insurance compulsory. My theory was, and still is, that we couldn’t tell everybody how to drive, but that we could hold everybody accountable for damage resulting from his negligence. The amendment did not get a vote in the committee and consequently never even reached the floor of the house. Virtually all of the legislators agreed that compulsory insurance would be a burden upon the poor. This was especially amusing to me because not so many poor people were riding in automobiles then. My experience has been that the poor people are those most often hurt by automobiles. Any power-driven

vehicle is a dangerous and deadly thing in incompetent hands. Everyone, of course, saw that point. Where my opponents differed with me was in the remedy. I wanted a man to pay for the damage he did. They were going to prevent all damage.

Hodgson and I clashed again over the bill granting each community the right to prohibit pool rooms.

"Why do you want to do that?" I asked. "Pool and billiards are delightful games. Men have enjoyed them for generations."

"Why, three-fourths of the crime and meanness in this state begins with idle young men hanging around pool rooms," he answered. "I know. I've seen them in my own home town. We've got to get rid of those places."

"Jake," I said, "the places haven't got anything to do with it. Boys go there because the entertainment is cheap and pleasant. They can play a game for only ten or fifteen cents. And the boys like a place that is well lighted. I've seen them out in the country gather around a bonfire in a vacant lot. If they happen to be bad boys, they'll brew trouble there just as easily as in a pool room. Some day when you and your crowd have closed up all the saloons and all the pool halls, the kids will gather around soda fountains, if they are still well lighted."

The forecast proved far more accurate than I could have imagined. At the time I was merely grabbing for a word—any place that was well lighted and that


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had something to sell for a nickel or a dime. Nevertheless the bill passed.

Half a dozen times during my legislative career we amended the law prohibiting gambling. We never attempted to define gambling in general terms so as to include all the games of chance. Usually we amended it by adding the names of some new games that had recently become popular. The dictionary, of course, defines gambling, but when you try to define it from a legal point of view, with prohibitory legislation in mind, it becomes impossible. Life itself is a gamble; the purchase of stocks and bonds is a gamble; raising crops is a gamble; buying them is a gamble if you intend to sell and not to eat them.

Hodgson, as usual, was keenly interested in every amendment of the anti-gambling law. The fact that you can't define gambling, as you can define murder or theft or forgery, proved nothing to him. He went resolutely ahead, stubbornly convinced that the legislature would some day overtake the ingenuity of those who invent games of chance and list all of them with such thoroughness that no one would be able to risk a penny except by some device specifically described by statute. Betting on horse races had been the point of beginning; next poker and dice; then all games played with a deck of cards. One of the amendments that I saw enacted prohibited the pitching of coins with the agreement between the players that the coin



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landing nearest a mark, usually a crack in the floor or cement sidewalk, should win the pot.

Aside from the fact that I believe it is fundamentally impossible to suppress gambling by law, our approach to the problem is invariably emotional, which means that we should fail even if the job were feasible.

The approach is something like this: "Oh, those wicked dice! Oh, those wicked cards! If it were not for them, my darling little Charley would not be in the penitentiary." Anyone who thinks according to that highly emotional and absurd formula quite naturally begins by prohibiting the specific game Charley played; it requires years for him to break through to the point of prohibiting all games with cards and dice. I can prove this by the statute books themselves. Eventually, however, he will prohibit the use of these devilish devices in any public place—that law is numerous. Then he will set down all of the games he can think of that may have been played for money and prohibit them by name. Next day someone invents a new gambling-game not covered by the statutes, and the whole mess of prohibitory verbiage goes into the limbo of useless laws.

We can't say one to another: "Charley gambled and it brought about his ruin." No, that would imply that Charley ruined himself. Perish the thought! Charley was ruined by a deck of cards or a pair of dice. Personally, he is and was an angelic lad. But these inani-

mate objects leaped at him from the dark and committed mayhem upon him. Poor Charley!

As a matter of fact, the gambling is not what we object to, but the consequences of wasting money and time. Charley is so busy playing that he can't do his work or pay his bills. Very well, if that is Charley's course, let him pay the penalty for it. But, no, that would be intelligent. It would hold Charley, and not us, his keepers, to a strict accountability for his life. It would, in short, be liberty. And liberty frightens people nowadays. Actually they regard it as unsound public policy. That is where we are today and that is where we have been for a generation. On the whole, we think it better to appoint a wet nurse for Charley. We send someone to strike down the wicked deck of cards that attacked him. The fact that nothing comes of all this, however, doesn't open our eyes to its essential unsoundness. Robbed of his cards, Charley goes in for pitching horseshoes. Very well, horseshoes shall henceforth be illegal.

I have explained my basic philosophy at some length because it guided me toward a decision on scores of proposed laws. I was continually expounding these views, and many legislators agreed with them. But they whispered their agreement!

CHAPTER XVIII

My position on the prohibition issue, divorced to begin with from a personal love of liquor, was soon recognized by all as a conviction resting upon high legal grounds. I made occasion to say that I did not drink, and this increased my prestige in both camps. Many of the prohibitionists did drink, and of these the majority held themselves in very low esteem for not having the strength to resist. Some frankly asserted that they despised themselves for yielding to temptation.

The wets who were both politically and personally wet took great delight in taunting these bibulous dries, but I never did. I could see only too plainly the political advantage that a dry could gain by taking a

few drinks in the right company and on suitable occasions. Also I could see equally plainly the great advantage I gained, as a political wet, by being personally dry. This whole question was so shot through with confusion that it seemed to me absurd to call anyone a hypocrite.

Since none of the crowd with whom I should be expected to vote on this issue could be under any misapprehension about me, I spent most of my time with the prohibitionists, especially Tom Darling, because he seemed to have a chance to be elected speaker. And, whether elected or not, he would be a person of importance. I told him that I couldn't vote for him, but that I wouldn't vote against him. I would vote for the fanatical wet and thus throw my vote away. The race, obviously, was between Darling, the wet dry, and Kincaid, the dry wet. Darling appreciated my compromise almost as much as though I had agreed to vote for him. As a matter of fact, he was even more eager for my friendship than I was for his, because he knew the strength of the Callaghan machine and hoped for its support in a future race for governor. One populous county, machine-controlled, can often roll up such a brutal majority for a gubernatorial candidate that it will wipe out small adverse majorities in as many as twenty or even thirty rural counties.

On the night before the legislative session opened, the speakership campaign reached its crisis. All fac-

tions held caucuses and counted noses. We learned in these sessions that if the fanatical wets would abandon their candidate and support Kincaid, the dry wet, he would be elected, but they wouldn't compromise. Neither would the extreme drys compromise on Darling. Our course became obvious—open negotiations with Darling. We did so, and he readily promised a fair division of the committee appointments. The upshot of this was that we decided about midnight to abandon our dry wet and go over to the wet dry. As a result, Darling was overwhelmingly elected on the first ballot.

While the wet wets and the dry drys were hooting and the rest of us cheering, Darling called me to his desk and asked: "What committees do you want?"

"Judiciary and appropriations," I answered. They are by long odds the most important, but it was no time to be modest. I was promptly appointed to both. Darling probably overestimated my part in swinging the moderate wets to his support. As a matter of fact, I had been very careful, because I had to go on pretending that my real alliance was with the extreme wets who had refused to compromise. Several test votes would soon be taken, but I was now in a position to dodge them; the appropriations committee always went on a junket to all state institutions and any other places of interest they could think of, and I should necessarily go along. By the time I returned, the members would already have had their hottest

fights, the various camps would be well defined, and I should have escaped all of the personal enmities incident to this turbulent procedure. Nearly every legislative session is soon enlivened by a few fist fights; after having observed no less than a score of them, I believe I can state accurately the cause of at least ninety per cent. It is nothing more than too many men crowding into one overheated and often badly ventilated room. That being the real cause of the fights, I have always endeavored to miss them and remain absolutely ignorant of the ill will that lingers after the tumult and shouting subside.

CHAPTER XIX

On the day before the appropriations committee departed, Mike Callaghan came to see me.

"You're doing fine," he said. He had taken the hotel room adjoining mine and arranged for the door between them to be unlocked. He came into my room attired in his nightshirt, sat down in a straight chair, and propped his bare feet on the window-sill. His bulging stomach suggested a large pumpkin concealed under the white linen. I wanted to tell him to remove it from his lap and make himself more comfortable.

"I see you've landed on the appropriations committee," he continued. "You'll be going with them tomorrow on their biennial picnic. They'll have a Thanksgiving Day dinner with the blind, the orphans,

the convicts, the nuts in the asylums, and the other nuts in the university. That's all that most of them will do except pick up some souvenirs and surround highballs and put in a word for Aunt Lucy's no-count nephew, so that he can't be separated from his soft job and sent to the reformatory, where he probably belongs. That's what they usually do, all except about three or four or five, and they draw the appropriations bill and amount to something. I know you well enough to know that you're going to draw most of that bill. I didn't come here to make a speech on that subject. But just drawing the bill isn't enough. There are two other things I want you to do. One of them is to keep your eyes open for able men, especially those fit for better jobs. I don't know how it happens, but there always are such men even in political jobs, and in the long run most of them come out on top. If we take over the state government, you and I—and that's what we intend to do, so there's no use mincing words about it—we're going to give this state the best administration it ever had. That's lots less trouble than a rotten administration. So keep your eyes open for good men. In spite of hell and high water, the administration of public affairs tends to get better, not worse, and I never pull against the current. Now, the next thing I want you to do is dig up a lot of dirt that would be good stuff in a legislative investigation. Something is always rotten—you know that. Well, get hold of it, and keep your mouth shut.

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For the present we're rolling our hoop along with the governor's, but we don't want him to get any mistaken ideas about what a great administrator he is. Be ready to unload on him."

"I had thought of that," I said.

"I judged so," and Mike nodded approvingly. "One more thing," he continued, "—and this is important: wherever you find dirt, be sure to get in touch with all the vinegar-faced freaks who've got it in for the heads of the institutions, for crazy reasons of their own. The crazier, the better. You'll find them everywhere, but grab their names and addresses only where you find real dirt. As a rule, these crabs would not see anything important, even if the building was burning down, but they'll talk their heads off just the same."

"What good would they be?" I asked, honestly puzzled.

"Well," Callaghan drawled, "an investigation is a funny thing. Sometimes you want to go right through with it and sometimes you get what you want out of it within two days and wish to heaven you could stop it. I found out a long time ago that the way to turn off an investigation is to open the doors to malice, revenge, prejudice, envy, irrelevant chatter—in short, the nuts. Understand?"

I understood. In fact, it struck me as a very clever idea. I never should have thought of it. Mike grew mellow as I expressed my admiration and thanks.

“Remember the old copy-book line ‘Knowledge is power’?” he asked. I nodded. “That’s all there is to anything—knowledge. It’s always been a mystery to me why the silk-stockings crowd insists on thinking that there must be something smelly about my rise in politics. My only sin was to know more than the other fellows. It’s the same offense that lifts a plow hand into international banking, manufacturing, or merchandising. They understand it well enough in those fields, but when the same kind of a kid turns his mind to public affairs, it’s different. As a matter of fact, I’m a better lawyer without a license than nine-tenths of the ones we’ve got around our town. And another thing that puzzles me is that our gang knows it, and the lawyers don’t. Educated people have to have brains labeled; if they ain’t labeled, they can’t find ’em, but a mule-skinner can. Common people have got the most sense. The only reason I’m where I am is because I know how. A political machine isn’t held together by loot. It has to have its ideals and loyalties no less than the silk-stockings crowd. You know why our crowd sticks together? Why, it’s because our fellows think they’re better patriots. And, what’s more, I’m a long ways from thinking they ain’t, if that interests anybody. Well, good-night. I’ve got to get up early. Don’t bother me with a letter unless it’s important. Good-night.”

Mike planted his funny, fat little feet, braced his short legs, then rolled off the chair rather than rose

from it, balanced himself, and toddled into his bedroom, looking very much like something that belonged in a toy-store. A moment later I heard a crash as though every timber in his bed had splintered; this was followed by the squeak and rattle of horrified springs. Mike had retired for the night.

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## CHAPTER XX

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The appropriation committee's junket turned out so remarkably like Callaghan's forecast that I shall omit most of the details. There was so much play going on that we frequently lost three or four members for days at a time. Once we had to send a sergeant to bring back a subcommittee of five; they were supposed to be interviewing the state game warden; the sergeant found them in a boat having a fine time catching fish by the bushel in prohibited waters. Three of us worked every day and filled notebooks with information. I had brought along the appropriation bills of the past five sessions, and these helped me a great deal in pursuing my inquiries. I very soon found out that one could not characterize a whole administration as either good or bad; one institution would be



ably managed while another was a riot. The responsibility in each case rested with one man. The various systems of supervision seemed to make little difference. Day after day I was increasingly impressed with the importance of Mike's advice about finding able men. Every legislative session for the past ten years had produced a bale of bills providing new systems for management of state institutions. There were half a dozen systems then in force, but each institution reflected the ability of the executive immediately in charge.

The worst one I found was the asylum for the blind. An important function of such an institution is education, but the man at the head of it was not even aware of the existence of the newer improvements in educational systems for the blind. His commissary department was also badly managed; consequently the quality of the food served was out of all proportion to what it cost. I knew within two hours that this place would furnish all the dynamite necessary to rock the state. The committee spent only one day there, but I remained when they left. I was determined to find something dramatic and easily explained in the newspapers, because, after all, you can't go before the public with a long-winded dissertation on how to teach the blind to do fractions; neither is it easy to hold public attention with a comparison between the menus of various state institutions. Discipline, I could see, was very strict here, so

I went among the inmates—more than half of whom were children—looking for a usable sob story about whippings. None developed, but I finally stumbled upon something much better. These blind boys and girls had folded one hundred thousand campaign circulars for the governor and tucked them into envelopes. For this they had been paid just about one-fifth the usual piece-scale wage; and that wage, incidentally, was so low that I never could understand why anyone accepted the job. The wards of the state had been delighted with their opportunity to garner a few pennies, but that made no difference. I had what I wanted.

Merely to contemplate the terrific effect of such a bombshell, once it exploded, gave me a nervous chill. There had been several investigations of the penitentiaries and insane asylums, but this would be something entirely different. Children—and blind children—not criminals—badly fed, poorly taught, and finally sweated by the chief executive of the state. Heaven help him if ever I pulled the trigger! From the moment I unearthed those circulars I knew that I could walk into the governor's office without removing my hat. I spent one more day at this institution interviewing the nuts; then I was through.

When the committee had finally completed its work, we returned to the capital and I immediately drafted an appropriation bill. I offered it apologetically, just as a working outline. Nevertheless, there

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was a great advantage in furnishing the first draft, because no matter how many changes might subsequently be made, I should still be putting across far more than I could ever have inserted into another member's draft. Also, it forced every other member of the committee to question me about the items in which he was interested, and that gave me an opportunity to show how much I knew. Some of the members had spent so little time with the committee that they didn't know how much work anyone had done. Having seized the initial advantage, I did not push myself forward during the committee sessions. On the contrary, I often left the room and returned to the floor of the house.

CHAPTER XXI

A great many of the legislators had to go home frequently in order to give attention to their private affairs. They were always afraid, during these absences, that their local bills would lose their places on the calendar. Local bills almost always are of more political importance to a member than general legislation. Since I had made arrangements not to absent myself during the session, I volunteered to look after these bills for all who applied. They are never debated, and all that is necessary is to ask for a vote on them in their proper turn. I put them through the mill by the dozens. Everyone had observed by this time that I had no pet legislation of my own, and therefore it was not dangerous to ask a favor of me.

During the fourth week of the session one of the

members died. He was a strange specimen from a barren, sandy waste where the farmers had been planting the wrong crops for decades and cursing the government while watching them wither. One could understand why, with such a constituency, his platform was the single tax and nothing else. Incidentally, Henry George would have gone mad if ever he could have heard this fellow expound his theory. About the only time his fellow members were aware of his existence was when he hurled his inkwell at the wall. He could be depended upon to do this at least once every session. The cause of these outbursts was that he could write only with a stub pen, and the state, for some unknown reason, didn't furnish that kind except on special request. He would start to write, his pen would splatter ink, and then—crash! Another inkwell had bit the calcimine from the wall. Also, his neighbors often fared badly.

When his death was reported, I delivered a brief eulogy; it was my maiden speech. Then I took over all his local bills and had them passed under a special order. It was the first time during his legislative career that his constituents had been so promptly served. They sent me a resolution of thanks. I decided, while basking in the glory of these Christian deeds, to see whether I was really getting anywhere or merely serving as an obliging menial. There was a provision in the pending appropriation bill for a new training school for teachers, but another bill would

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have to be passed to determine where it should be built. The political answer to that question, of course, is that it should be built in every county in the state. However, any fair person could look at the map, note the locations of the existing schools, and see where the next one ought to be; at least he'd know what part of the state it should serve. Unfortunately, however, the logical location in that territory was warmly sponsored by the most truculent prohibitionist in the house. I went into executive session with him one afternoon to see if we could compromise this matter.

"Barnes," I said, "I think I can put that school in the county adjoining yours. That's in your district and that's where the school ought to be. Those people don't expect to get it, and if they thought they had half a chance, I believe they'd donate the site. Wouldn't they?" He thought they would. Land was cheap then. "You write to two or three of them," I suggested, "and tell them to pick out a good site and come up here and see me and offer it to the state as a gift. Give them just a week. If they want it, they'll step lively. You can tell them confidentially, when they get here, that you have framed this thing up with me, but that it's your idea and the only way to get the school for your district."

Barnes wrote the letters, and eight days later I met a committee of three citizens carrying a deed to ninety-four acres of land. I told them that in school matters politics did not count with me; that I was



going to fight for their district because that was where the school belonged. I wrote my bill, introduced it, and then went on a still hunt for votes. The easiest part of this hunt was corralling the violent wets. I got all of them in one lump.

"We'll make a monkey of Barnes," I told them. "He's got a bill giving the school to his county. Well, one of the most prominent wets in this legislature introduces a bill placing the school in the adjoining county and passes it. We won't even let Barnes make a speech for his bill. We won't let anybody make a speech. We'll just jam it through under the rule."

The rest of the votes I got either as personal favors or on a request to give me just one vote for my bill, and if it didn't pass, I'd drop the matter permanently and give them a vote some day. Darling granted my request to put the bill at the head of the calendar whenever I should be ready. One week after the committee had delivered the deed to the site, I called up my bill. There were only eighteen dissenting votes, all of them by members I had not approached because they were too close to other sites. Only eight members who had given me their promise failed me. A deadlock that everyone had expected to cause turmoil during the entire session was broken without debate. Even the author of the bill hadn't spoken. I called on the governor late that afternoon and placed the title deeds on his desk.

"Would you mind undertaking a little bill for me?"

he asked. Would I! I wanted to jump up and down and yell. By jingo, I had crossed a goal line. And in my first session too.

"Why, governor," I said, "I should consider it an honor."

He produced the bill. It simply transferred a few thousand dollars from his fund for office expenses to the fund for traveling-expenses; a matter of no importance to the legislature, but of considerable importance to a man who wishes to go on a trip and finds the official purse empty. I introduced the bill on the following morning and explained that the governor had asked me to do so; it passed by viva-voce vote. Later in the day he sent me a note, thanking me, and inclosing another bill. It granted the secretary of state permission to spend five hundred dollars of his office fees for stamps. I had it passed at once under a special order. There followed a long string of these necessary little odd lots of legislation. Few men would make a spectacle of themselves by opposing such bills, but that isn't necessary; you can hinder them by refusing unanimous consent and otherwise harass an executive you don't like or make a fool of the member who undertakes to act as his legislative messenger boy. I was standing this test amazingly well. My own crowd felt that they had to be with me, right or wrong; the extreme drys appreciated what I had done for Barnes; and a great many individual

members were glad to pay their personal debts so easily. By letting all important legislation of a controversial nature strictly alone, I kept out of every contest that made enemies; indeed, I accomplished even more than that; I completely concealed my strength; no one thought of me as a strong member, because the stalwarts all carried banners and shouted lustily.

When the appropriation bill was finally ready for presentation, the session was nearing its close. I examined the final draft with much satisfaction, for, though the total had been cut down below that of the preceding session in order to help the governor win his re-election, eighty-seven of the one hundred and forty-two salary changes I had made remained. Every one of these changes was an increase of exactly one hundred dollars a year. Not much of an increase, but I fixed upon this sum because it is easily overlooked in a five-pound document made up largely of figures. Nearly all of the battles over the appropriation bill had been fought out in the committee room and we passed it after only two days of debate. I at once wrote letters to all of the men whose salaries I had raised, telling them that it had given me much pleasure to bring about this recognition of their faithful service. Eighty-seven men do not constitute an army, but they can be made to serve as a nucleus. Beyond question I had laid the foundations for a state

machine. I was eager now for the close of the session so that I could go home and report to Mike that we were definitely on our way toward our objective.

On the fifth day before the date fixed for adjournment the governor summoned me by executive messenger to come to him at once. I would find him, the messenger said, waiting for me in the library. I supposed, of course, that this meant the library adjoining his office in the capitol, but it turned out to be the library of the executive mansion, and that puzzled me. I wondered, every step of the way, whether I ought to go, and how I should evade if he offered some entangling alliance. I wanted nothing to happen at this late date to mar my record.

"I want to show you something," he said as soon as I had been ushered into the room. I could see that he was excited. "This is the damnedest collection of junk ever nailed together." His gesture indicated the mansion. "Come upstairs." He was already leading the way, so I followed. At every step the stairs creaked. We walked along a corridor until he stopped and opened a door.

"There!" he exclaimed tragically. About three-fourths of the ceiling plaster had fallen and the luxuriously furnished room was a ruin covered with gray dust. "Every time we take a deep breath," he said, "a plumbing pipe bursts or a chimney falls down. Every governor we've had—at least every one I've known—has tried to corkscrew enough money

out of the legislature to keep this shack from tumbling in on his family, and every one of them has finally had to face his wife and tell her that he has absolutely no political influence. It's humiliating." He raved on for ten minutes; then his wife joined him and they made it a duet for another ten minutes.

"I'll see what I can do," I told him.

Then I hurried back to the capitol and went on another still hunt for votes. This was a difficult test indeed, because the appropriation bill had already been passed, but I mustered a majority. Nearly every vote was promised on personal grounds. I drafted a bill placing twenty thousand dollars at the disposal of the governor to be used as he saw fit. It was a larger sum than he needed for repairs, but his wife was angry with him and I wanted to give him enough to let her make some alterations and recover from her grouch.

He thanked me effusively and then said: "I want to do something for you. Do you want a pardon?"

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## CHAPTER XXII

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We had no pardon board at that time ; all applications went directly to the governor. The standard method was to employ a lawyer to present the petition. If you got the right lawyer, you would probably get a pardon, unless the case was too outrageous to be politically safe. Paying political debts with pardons had been the custom for many years. They were virtually cash and often reimbursed a campaign speaker who had declined to accept expenses.

I told the governor that I had no applications for pardon on hand. He smiled, and I judged that he meant for me to go and get one. The very next morning, however, an elderly woman dressed in black and wearing a heavy veil called on me and begged me to intercede with the governor on behalf of her son.



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This was too much for coincidence. I knew that he had sent her. After talking for half an hour she offered me a certified check for one thousand dollars and continued to offer it at intervals of five minutes during the remainder of the interview—about two hours. I needed the money so urgently that the very sight of the check made my mouth water, but her son's case was of a type against which everything in me revolts. The boy had not been sane since puberty. During his lucid periods, which sometimes lasted many months, he had exhibited a brilliant mind, but he was dangerous. No one could possibly know when he would give way to fits of cruelty, including atrocious murder. He had been convicted of murder. His mother promised to place him in a private sanitarium for life. Under the law his insanity should have been recognized at the time of his trial; at least he was legally entitled to an asylum instead of the penitentiary. As a lawyer I could have taken the case with good conscience, but as a man my sympathy is not moved by such cases. I do not care what happens to homicidal maniacs and I am not inclined to parole them into the care of their mothers. I refused the case and decided to go home to the usual small fees, but the governor evidently hadn't intended to stop with one pardon in the first place. Two more applicants mysteriously found their way to me. I took their cases and their fees—five hundred dollars each.

One of these cases I must mention because of the

strange contrast it offers with the one I refused. The convict had been sentenced to life imprisonment for murder and had already spent three years in the penitentiary when his father brought the case and the papers appertaining to it to my attention. They showed that the murderer had been twenty-four years old when he committed the crime; that he was a minor employee in a large cheap restaurant in a town of five thousand where three lines of railway joined. He had gone there to work part of each year for six years when not needed on his father's farm. His previous record showed him peaceful, rather dull, honest, and remarkably thrifty. In the restaurant he had always been the victim of many practical jokes perpetrated by the other employees, but during his last period of employment he had become bitterly resentful for the first time and threatened repeatedly to "split somebody's head open with the meat-cleaver." His resentment was due to the fact that he was now in love with a woman employed in the restaurant kitchen, but no one knew about that, the woman least of all. One day he heard three men, among them his chief tormentor, discussing this woman as though she had been the common property of all of them. She had been—and they did not know they were being overheard. He assumed, of course, that they were teasing him, that they had learned of his secret; but their method on this occasion seemed too outrageous to be borne. "Just as soon as we're

off duty," he said, "I am going to split your head open with the meat-cleaver." And that's exactly what he did, although all three protested that they had not been teasing this time. But by waiting two hours instead of acting instantly, he made first-degree murder of what might have been homicide. It was about as clear a case of first-degree murder as one could find. If he had used a pistol, however, there might still have been some hope of mercy from the jurors, but a meat-cleaver offends our notions of chivalry. He had shown bad taste. The very facts that made his crime first-degree murder were those that prevented me from hesitating to accept his case and obtain his pardon. He was not crazy and not given to sudden, uncontrollable impulses to inflict pain. On the contrary, he was remarkably slow to act and no doubt felt that there was nothing else for him to do under the circumstances. Moreover, he had never been in trouble before, which I took as the surest indication that he wouldn't be again. Well, he wasn't. He went back to his father's farm and lived peacefully there for many years. As between a psychopath who kills, but who many believe cannot legally be considered a murderer, and a young man of the type I have just described, I much prefer to be merciful to the indubitably guilty sane person.

In the course of reporting to Mike on my return I told him about the pardons.

"Yes," he said, "it's a good graft if you don't press

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it too hard and make trouble. You're in the strategic position now to get a lot of that business. I should have told you about it sooner. You can make it worth about fifteen thousand dollars a year and not take up thirty days in the year doing it, either. That's more than you can make practicing law. But I'll tell you what you ought to do—what I'd do after a while. I'd go through that whole penitentiary system with a fine-tooth comb and locate some of the poor devils that ought to have had pardons years ago and can't get hold of a postage stamp to write a letter. Some of them can't even write. We'll look into that when we take charge."

"Do you think we'll support the governor?" I asked.

"I don't know," Mike said. "What difference does it make? No matter whether we elect him or bury him, we take charge, don't we? And, sonny, when we do, I'm going to build good roads up and down and across this state until a bird's-eye view of it will look like fourteen football fields all piled on top of one another."

"What makes you so crazy about streets and roads, Mike?" I asked.

He answered first with a blast of sizzling oaths, and then: "I was twelve years old before I ever saw a circus! Mud! Mud! Mud! Mud! Gummy, sticky . . ." blankety-blank-blankety—he was off again— "mud! Nothing anywhere but mud. Twelve years of mud!

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Only eight miles to town to see the circus, and I cried my eyes out every spring because I couldn't make it! And the country kids are still crying their eyes out. That's why! We're going to grab this state and build roads. It's fun to build roads. I think they're pretty."

CHAPTER XXIII

The next gubernatorial campaign opened earlier than usual and with political conditions in a state of confusion. However, that suited Mike, as it would any boss. Definite alignments based upon one really important paramount issue always work against the power of a political machine. The governor easily obtained his nomination to run for re-election, and similarly Darling, the speaker of the house, was nominated with only slight opposition to run against him. There was one independent candidate in the field, but he had run twice before without cutting much of a figure, so we did not pay a great deal of attention to him. His strength, we estimated, would be greater than it had been in the previous election, but that was more than agreeable to Mike, because it


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would help to divide the rural vote and thus give greater relative importance to our city-machine vote.

The governor seemed to take it for granted that Mike and I would support him; indeed, that we were already pledged to do so. Darling also assumed that he had our support. The longer they proceeded under this impression, the better the trading would be when the time came for a show-down. Out of the confusion and lack of a paramount issue one ominous fact protruded, a fact that we ought to have recognized sooner than we did. It was that the rural voters were keenly interested three months before election day, while the city voters scarcely seemed to realize that this would be an election year. Ordinarily no such division of interest would be noted; either a campaign was red-hot or it was dull for both Main Street and the country crossroads.

I judged that the growing enthusiasm for prohibition in the rural districts accounted for this phenomenon, and so did Mike, but we saw no occasion for alarm in that fact, since both Darling and the governor were ready to straddle this issue, as they had done more than once before. All three of the candidates were nominally prohibitionists, though both the governor and Darling drank; we didn't know whether the independent did or not. Mike smiled about that, and so did I, but we should have been wiser had we pondered the fact that this was the first gubernatorial campaign in our state that found

no champion of the wets on the stump. They were now definitely a minority, still strong, to be sure, but trading where once they had unfurled banners.

When he thought the time was ripe, Mike went to the capital to see the governor and have a showdown. He wanted to be sure that there would be no vetoes interfering with the program of state highway construction that we had determined upon. Callaghan, as I have explained before, was really fanatical on the subject of good roads, but there was always a high percentage of method in any madness that afflicted him; road-building would mean the extension of his political power. The governor saw this at once and objected. As a matter of fact, he also feared that Mike planned an era of wholesale graft. In that he was mistaken, but even without graft the program would increase the state's budget and thus decrease the governor's strength in the rural districts. He planned to run for United States senator after one more term as governor. There was widespread resentment against the steadily rising cost of government, but most of the outspoken protest could be heard only in remote agricultural counties. Mike wasn't well acquainted with them. It struck him as absurdly presumptuous for the governor to assume that he had our machine's support without promising anything in return, and he said so with characteristic bluntness.

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"I let you run things in your own bailiwick, don't I?" the governor argued.

Mike nearly burst a blood-vessel. "You let me!" he shouted. "Why, you couldn't even hire a hall to speak in my bailiwick if I didn't want you there. That's how you let me. If you think that's the basis on which we are trading, it's time for a show-down. You can make the road program the paramount issue and be elected on it, or you can pass it up and I'll elect Darling."

"That suits me right down to the ground," the governor answered, and the conference was over. Mike called me by long-distance telephone and asked me to get in touch with Darling at once so that we could have our show-down with him before any rumors about that day's doings could reach him. I did so and Darling came at once. He was eager for a definite understanding

The three of us went into session in Mike's little private office and Mike began by outlining his road program. He wanted it placed before the people by the victorious candidate for governor, so that it would have equal prestige with platform demands and approximately the same legislative support.

"I'll tell you," Darling said, hedging, "that isn't exactly what the country people want. It isn't what they're talking about. Of course the roads would be a fine thing and I think we ought to do something along that line, but the thing they're talking about is

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regulation of corporations, lower taxes, and fewer laws. Especially they are talking about lower taxes.”

“Well, you can’t make a campaign on those issues,” Mike argued, “because that’s the kind of stuff that that independent fellow has been bellowing about for the past six years. He hasn’t got anywhere with it. I wouldn’t let myself be sidetracked by the other fellow’s stuff. Come right out into the open with some of your own. Promise them lower taxes and more roads at the same time. Tell ’em you’ll save the money for the roads by a better administration. They think that can be done. I’m not sure it can’t either. Of course, we won’t lower the taxes, but we needn’t raise them much. And when they get the roads, they’ll be satisfied. It’s funny how farmers yell for lower taxes. Nobody ever got lower taxes. It just isn’t done, that’s all. Taxes are like cornstalks; they grow up, not down. It isn’t human to lower taxes. They surely know that. I wouldn’t pay too much attention to their blather. A candidate going around wailing about high taxes and how he’ll lower them and save the poor people from starvation always sounds too much like a Socialist. Tell them what a great state they live in and that it hasn’t got near enough roads for its enormous commerce; tell ’em the city people have got paved streets and that, by jingo, the country people are going to have paved roads. That sounds much better than pulling a poor mouth.”

Darling laughed. "Ordinarily you'd be right," he said, "but this year the country people are all wrought up and hot under the collar and milling around."

"What are they hot about?" Mike asked.

"I don't know," Darling admitted. "They've got political prickly heat and they're itching to get to the polls and vote against something. They're not going to vote *for* anything this year."

"That's bad," Mike mused. "Still, nobody in his right mind votes against good roads."

"I'll tell you what let's do," Darling proposed. "I'll promise them the roads and you deliver me this county and cut loose with that dynamite about the blind asylum. That'll blast the governor out of the race and I ought to win. The road program won't help me any, so I can't bear down hard on it, but I'll use enough of it to pledge my administration. How does that suit you?"

"Fair and square," Mike said.

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## CHAPTER XXIV

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We then took up the matter of campaign expenses and other details. The bargain was definitely closed. And now I knew that I should not be supporting my friend the governor for re-election. In practical politics real friendships are almost impossible. Of the men you meet, more than half are on their way to political oblivion. Trying to build up a wide circle of warm acquaintance with some semblance of friendship in it while serving in a public office is very much like introducing yourself to the passengers on a sinking ship. You meet a man and like him very much, and swish! he disappears. You meet another man and are friends for a while, and presently he forges so far ahead of you that he also has disappeared just as definitely as the one who sank. Not all the men who



are marching toward oblivion are failures, either. Take, for example, a governor whose term is nearing its close. He certainly is not a failure, since he holds the highest office in the state. Unless he is going to run for another term or for the United States Senate, however, his political career is about over. And if you are in politics, no matter how dear he is to you, you are so concerned with the incoming governor that you have little time for the retiring incumbent. It makes little difference to you whether he is going out at the top or at the bottom—he is going out. Nearly every high official is a lonely man during his last month in office. The most enduring friendships among politicians are those which cross party lines. If it is understood in the first place that the other fellow is your political enemy, you can be personal friends for life. Within your own camp, however, you have your hardest fights and continuous struggle.

The governor and I had come to be fairly good friends. I knew that he would feel that I was an ungrateful wretch. Perhaps I was, according to ordinary standards. It is precisely these standards that you dare not apply in practical politics. If, out of gratitude and friendship, I had supported the governor, he would have been through in two more years anyway. It is the business of a politician to make governors, not to love and honor them.

I knew him well enough to guess what his course would be after the show-down. His record as a prohi-

hibitionist was fairly good, and now it would be the part of wisdom for him to accuse Darling of straddling that issue in order to obtain Callaghan's support. Not having to straddle himself, there was no reason why he shouldn't gain all the strength possible from exposing Darling's strategy. I wanted to stop this if I could. It seemed to me that the prohibition issue was becoming dangerously overaccentuated. All of us were using it continually; if we kept this up, the state might go dry. Of course at that time I didn't realize that the whole country was definitely headed toward the Volstead Act.

I went to the capital on the day after our conference with Darling and called on the governor. He had just finished writing a speech attacking Darling on precisely the ground I had feared. I read the speech at his invitation. He stated briefly and very truly that Darling had been elected to the legislation three times as an anti-prohibitionist and once as a prohibitionist; that he had run for speaker of the house as a prohibitionist and received nearly all of the anti-prohibitionist votes; that he was now running for governor as a prohibitionist and would receive the support of the crookedest, wettest political machine in the state. He challenged Darling to deny this if he dared by denouncing Mike Callaghan as a corrupt politician in league with lawbreakers.

"Governor," I said, "I don't want that kind of a

campaign. It will take some dry votes away from Darling, but it will give him a lot of wet votes in return. The only certain result will be an injury to the good name of the city I represent. Mike's organization is not so clean as it might be, but it is vastly better than people realize and there are influences at work inside of it to make it better. I am one of those influences. I don't want you to make that speech."

"Is that all?" the governor asked, smiling. He knew that there would be a threat attached.

"No, governor," I answered, and then I told him about the bombshell that could be exploded with reference to the blind asylum. He was astounded.

"I didn't have a thing to do with that," he said. "This is the first time I have ever heard of it."

I reminded him of the fact that politically that wouldn't make any difference. "The question," I said, "is whether we explode both bombshells or neither."

He became thoroughly angry then, and, though I knew what my job was, I couldn't help sympathizing with him, at least a little bit. From his point of view he had leaned over backward to trade with Mike and with me, and now we were not only throwing him over, but trying to muzzle him.

"I am not afraid," he said, "of any disclosure you can make about those circulars mailed from the blind asylum. I had nothing to do with it, knew nothing about it; and I can prove it. On the other hand, what

I have to say about Darling carries its own proof. I'll take my chances with your scandal in order to tell the truth."

"All right, governor," I said. "I just wanted to give you a chance. I'm not supporting you, but we've been good friends. I'm not here to advise you. I just wanted to lay the facts before you in ample time."

I could see that his resolution was not nearly so firm as his declarations indicated, so I brought the conference to a close at once. To leave him in a state of indecision seemed to me better than to press for an understanding.

On my return I learned that Mike had gone to hear the independent candidate for governor speak in a small town about fifty miles away. I was glad to hear that he had done this, because disquieting rumors were beginning to reach me. As a matter of fact, most of them had reached me during my trip to and from the capital. Virtually all the political talk I had heard on the train related to this man. He was already being referred to as "Governor Tom" and there was an unmistakable note of affection in the sobriquet. Also, I detected enthusiasm and admiration, as though the speaker were saying: "Well, boys, one of our own kind is going to win this time and make monkeys of the slick politicians." Anyone who can put himself before the people in that guise is the shrewdest of all politicians, whether he has had previous experience or not. This man had held a few minor

offices in his own county, but his principal income was from his farms.

You may wonder why Mike and I knew so little about him; the principal reason was that he had never made a speech in any of the cities of the state. It was part of his program not to go near them. Naturally we assumed that he was some sort of crank or freak, especially in view of the fact that he had already run twice without cutting much of a figure. However, I now learned for the first time a few significant facts about the progress he was making. The traveling salesman for a soap-manufacturing company told me of a little town where Governor Tom had spoken in his first campaign to an audience of eighteen men assembled in front of the post office. In the same town he had been heard two years later by about one hundred and fifty. In this campaign the same town had provided an audience of twelve hundred, which was somewhat more than the total population and meant that at least half of those people had come in from the farms, probably over a radius of twenty miles. One newspaper had just sent a correspondent to report his speeches. Here was a thing to ponder.

When Mike returned, I was more eager to tell him what I had heard about Governor Tom than about my conference with the actual governor.

He grunted morosely and then said: "He's a nut. Regular dynamiter. I heard him speak."

"Does he get votes?" I asked.



“Yes,” Callaghan admitted. “He’s got the genuine amen gargle.” That was Mike’s standard term for a speaker whose voice indicates great emotion. There is no doubt that it makes a tremendous impression, properly used, and yet it is the easiest of all platform tricks to learn. If you doubt me, just try it yourself. To register great anger is difficult; to be funny is extremely difficult, and, if you fail, terrible. Fear and horror are also difficult to express in a speech, but almost anyone can put a sob in his voice. You don’t even have to reserve it for such words as “mother” or “my country” or “children.” You can say “woodpile” or “salt-cellar” and put a sob in them, it is so easy. But it brings home the bacon when properly used.

I tried to draw out more about Mike’s impressions of Governor Tom, but without success. Not until long afterwards did I learn the details of what had happened, but the story belongs here. Mike reached the conclusion that Governor Tom could be elected, and therefore sought a conference with him. The rebuff he received was probably the most terrific of his entire career.

Governor Tom declined to shake hands and told him bluntly: “I don’t care to know you; I’m against you and everything you represent. I welcome your personal enmity and political opposition. I am going to be elected and that will be the end of your machine. That’s all I have to say to you except get out.” And Mike got out, carrying with him the unpleasant im-



pression that this man would probably be the next governor of the state.

Governor Tom had struck a new note in our politics, and thereafter we were destined to deal with what really was the paramount issue, instead of something merely put forward by force of propaganda or personalities. The real issue was the inevitable conflict between city and country; between our growing industry and commerce on one side and agriculture on the other. The major portion of all public revenues had always come from the taxation of land, and that meant that the agricultural districts were now paying far more than the industrial communities. Governor Tom's program was to lay a heavier tax upon corporations. He was thus promising the farmers exactly what they wanted and in the way that they wanted it—not a smaller state budget, but an equalization of the burden. As for the prohibition issue, he dismissed it with a paragraph, taking the position that the matter was not debatable. Anyone not allied with the liquor traffic or addicted to the habit of drinking, he assumed, would necessarily be a prohibitionist. I admired him very much, because he was the first living proof I had encountered that the theory of practical politics held by the founders of this country could still be made to work in a campaign. By that I mean that he had first studied the tax situation and reached an honest conclusion as to what was true; next he had sought a remedy; and

then he had gone before the people to tell them what they ought to do. Moreover, he had been patient in defeat and retained his faith. He had made his own constructive criticism of the state government into a platform, and finally he had made that platform the paramount issue. That was how the giants of our country's youth practiced politics and I have no doubt that they thought this method always would be used in a republic.

It has always seemed to me that the word "politician" ought to mean a man of really awe-inspiring ability. He should be learned in the law far beyond the ordinary practicing attorney; he should be an able administrator, a searching critic of government; his knowledge of history should far excel that of most history teachers, and, in addition to this vast and scholarly store of information, he should also be an orator and publicist. That is my conception of a politician. If he isn't that, I should say that he is merely a candidate—one who lets politics and politicians toss him about, rather than one who creates issues and solves problems. We have a great many public men who simply ride the thoughts of others or any popular fancy, whim, prejudice, enthusiasm, or hate. And these are the very men we mean when we speak of politicians. I wish that the word "politician" could mean something even greater than statesman, for, as I see it, an able, fearless, honest administrator qualifies as a statesman and yet he might not know the A

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B C 's of guiding the future course of the state by implanting a new theory of government firmly in the public mind. Such men represent stability beyond the point of safety—and some very great men can be so classified. There is always need for the creative thinker who can persuade as well as govern; statecraft is not a fixed science, it is an art; government is either undergoing constant evolution or it is moribund.

CHAPTER XXV

Mike's interview with Governor Tom had stimulated him to a frenzy of energy. He worked literally day and night, never less than fourteen hours and sometimes eighteen. Nothing to compare with the statewide organization he built had ever been known before, or has it since. He took the model of our city machine and extended it to every country precinct, even in the most remote counties.

One day he said to me: "Why the devil doesn't the governor attack Darling?" I reminded him of my efforts to prevent that attack.

"Ancient history," he grumbled. "They'd better get at each other and make the fur fly. That dynamiter is hogging the show. Crack down with the blind-asylum dirt."

I drew up a brief statement of the facts and sent it to ten members of the legislature, asking them to pledge me their support for an investigation at the coming session. At the same time I gave the statement and my letters to the press. The publication created a tremendous impression. Moreover, from day to day I was able to give out the answers received from my legislative friends and keep the subject very much alive. I had carefully selected men who would write the sort of letters calculated to help my own political fortunes; all of them expressed confidence in my ability and my good faith in bringing this matter to public notice. The governor's denial that he had any knowledge of the transaction sounded very weak. By shooting first we also took away much of the force of his attack upon Darling, which included, of course, an attack upon our machine. People smiled at that, seeing clearly that he was merely hitting back.

However, in the light of subsequent developments, it would have been much better politics if I had let him fire the first shot, because we accomplished nothing but the final destruction of both men. Instead of making their dog fight the paramount issue, they succeeded only in committing hara-kiri. Unfortunately their charges against each other were true!

The election became a landslide for Governor Tom. We have no better descriptive term in politics than "landslide." You have to participate in such a cam-

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paign to know just how accurate it is. Picture my friend Mike at the center of a vast network of organization, extending over many thousands of square miles. Precinct chairmen scurry hither and yon at the direction of county chairmen, who report almost daily to the central organization. Posters, circulars, and buttons go out in bales. Speakers are routed by experts, so that no part of the state is neglected. All this hurry and labor and planning gathers momentum from day to day until the very eve of election, when tired nerves can scarcely stand the strain. Then the state simply tips up on edge, figuratively speaking, and crash! the whole organization comes tumbling down, swept to confusion under a torrent of adverse votes. Unless a man is devoid of patriotism, I do not believe he can view a political landslide without feeling a thrill of pride and confidence in our form of government. Here, far more than in the ordinary election, you know that the people have spoken and that the ballot is sovereign.

By ten o'clock on the night of election the result was beyond all doubt. Mike quit reading the reports, clapped on his derby hat, stuffed a new cigar into his mouth, and said: "Well, that's over." He was grinning. Then we went home. I was in no doubt about my course. I had learned enough by this time to subscribe to the ancient dogma of all practical politicians: "If you can't beat 'em, join 'em." Governor



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Tom was not destined to find me a thorn in his path. Quite the contrary.

Three days after the election a new storm broke. I was working late in my office when, to my astonishment, Mike came in. It was the first time he had ever visited me.

"Know what's going on?" he asked casually, while propping his feet on my desk.

"No," I answered.

"Governor has sent fifty special officers," he said. "They're raiding everything. This is his answer to the blind-asylum thing."

I jumped to my feet. "What do you want me to do?" I exclaimed.

"Nothing, tonight," he said, still quite composed. "We may be able to do something later. I'm not sure We'll see. . . . But, kid, watch your step. Don't get tangled up."

We sat there a long time in silence. I was deeply touched by this demonstration of Mike's affection. I know exactly what he meant to communicate; also that it would be impossible for him to put it into words. He was through. And he was appointing me his successor, not to carry on his policies, but to inaugurate my own.

On the following day my office was crowded with anxious friends and relatives of imprisoned men and women. All were confident that I could soon have

them released. I looked into the situation and discovered that the governor had made arrangements to transfer several judges from other districts to our county to try the cases. They were not justices of the peace, either; they were judges. He had invoked the full powers of his office under laws that had almost been forgotten. At one time—and not many years before—such high-handed procedure would have been resented bitterly as an attack upon local self-government. Now it was either approved or accepted with gloomy resignation. There was no fight left in us. Our wide-open town simply closed its doors and switched off the lights. Public opinion had spoken; no matter that it stuttered, or that the governor was somewhat of a hypocrite. Personally I was glad to have done with that phase of boss rule. I never had believed that it represented the best sources of either strength or revenue. I made a few gestures in behalf of the victims of the raids in order to maintain my titular position, but that was the sole purpose. Mike simply abdicated and went on a vacation.

CHAPTER XXVI

As soon as I could clear my office of unwelcome clients, I summoned the executive heads of two construction companies that had done some work for the city, and we formed a corporation, in which I received a block of stock. Nominally, it was my fee for legal services. Actually, it was understood that henceforth this company would get contracts from the city—and it did. Next I summoned the executives of our three trunk-line railroads and offered them my assistance in acquiring the land they needed for a union station. This project had been hanging fire for several years because of the excessive price one man had fixed for one parcel of land. There was another delayed project for a new post office. It was held up because the proper site would be near the new union

station. I suggested a way out of this difficulty. My plan was that the city government should offer to obtain the proper post-office site for the federal government and transfer it. The city would then exercise its power of eminent domain and take the plot of ground which the railroads had been unable to buy. The price, even when fixed by condemnation proceedings, would no doubt be much above the federal government's appropriation for a post-office site and we would then raise the question as to whether the city should absorb the loss. While this question was pending, the railroads would offer to buy the plot without any loss. That would meet with public approval and the sale would be made. Thus the whole matter would be straightened out and the union station could be built. In return for this assistance the railroads would give generous contracts to my newly formed corporation. We reached an agreement within two hours. It was a better stroke of business than old Mike had accomplished during his entire career. I estimated that it would net me not less than twenty-five thousand dollars and it called for no illegal actions. On the contrary, it helped everyone affected except the recalcitrant landowner, and even he was awarded about twice what his property was worth by the committee of five which the court named to fix the value. He was holding out for twenty times the assessed valuation of the property, or about ten times its market value.

This transaction brought me much prestige in the world of big business, where I had previously been regarded as a mere fixer. Railroad executives were conferring among themselves rather anxiously at that time about the coming session of the legislature. Other business interests were also appointing committees and planning to send lobbyists to the capital to fight Governor Tom's program for extensive regulation of corporations and an upheaval in the tax laws. All these men assumed that I would be a leader of the opposition, and naturally my name was mentioned in their conferences. After a few of them had met me in the course of the union-station deal, they decided to admit me to their councils. A sort of super-committee of seven met one night in the private car of a railroad president down in the yards. I had never before seen the inside of a private car, but from early boyhood private cars had always meant to me the last word in Oriental luxury. I don't even know what I meant by Oriental luxury; at any rate, that private car stands out in my memory as one of life's saddest disillusionments. It was nothing but an office on wheels, with a tiny living-room, dusty and sprinkled with cinders and jammed to a kitchen too close for comfort.

Our conference was an amusing game of hide and go seek played in a fog. They assumed that I was some kind of a grafter and tried to open the way for me to show my hand so that they could determine

whether my game was too rough for safety. I let them know that I had no intention of asking for money. This reassured them and we then proceeded on the assumption that I opposed Governor Tom's program as a matter of principle. There seemed no hope of explaining just where I did stand, so I let it go at that. My actual position was one of accord with Governor Tom, tempered by a desire to prevent the lunatic enthusiasts among his supporters from carrying his ideas too far and wrecking what was, to my way of thinking, an obviously constructive program. If the committee had known that, the conference would have closed at once. Business men always assume that every new governmental policy which touches them is the work of an anarchist and deliberately designed to do the work of a bomb. I explained to them the importance of giving me exhaustive data bearing on all of the points soon to be at issue, so that I could win legislative strength by virtue of superior information. Instead they eagerly furnished me their lengthy printed briefs attacking Governor Tom's program *in toto*. They couldn't understand that it had already won and had the force of the governor's word of honor. Their theory was that they would furnish arguments that I would deliver to the legislature with such effect that the governor's whole program would fail.

Business men, I think, usually do this in similar situations; to me, at least, it explains why they get

such small returns from their expenditures for lobbying. Not only were their arguments entirely unsuited for use anywhere except before a higher court, but even their statistical data could be understood only by experts familiar with the businesses in question. In short, they were eager to address the public in a foreign language. I could see the grave danger that this would lead to disaster, for both them and Governor Tom; moreover, I had not the time to decipher their arguments and data and translate them into the language of legislators. Something had to be done, however, so I urged them to summon Mike Callaghan. They smiled at this. Now, they thought, the cat is out of the bag—Mike does the collecting. I couldn't let that impression stand unchallenged—not that Mike or I cared a hoot what they thought, but because I had to have Mike's help, and in order to get it I must make them understand his value.

"Gentlemen," I said, "we are face to face with a problem as old as government. You have prepared arguments that are of tremendous weight to business men and of no weight whatever to politicians; in fact, they aren't even intelligible. You are girding your loins to enter a fight that ended on election day. Politically, Governor Tom's program now has the binding force of a signed contract. You are going to be regulated and your taxes are going to be increased. The only question is whether the job will be done sanely or insanely. Most of the men who will

vote for the forthcoming laws will not even read them. They will accept what the committees offer. If I fight the governor's program, I shall not be on any of the committees that draft the bills. Consequently I am going to support the governor's program. But I am going to endeavor to make it constructive. The great changes it will bring about are not necessarily damaging to you. What I know of history proves to me that eventually the various economic interests of a state come to have their proportionate share of influence in the government—but rarely before they pay their proportionate share of the taxes. This state has always been ruled by the farmers because they produced its wealth. Now the cities and the public utilities have become almost as important as agriculture. Hence it is time for them to take their rightful place in the councils of government—but not until they pay their taxes.

“What is about to happen to you isn't a disaster; rather, it is your badge of manhood. You are no longer infants. Of course, if you are going to kick and scream when the farmers present you your long pants, they'll spank you. I'm going to try to keep you from getting spanked—that's all. You'll find me working hand in glove with the new governor. Someone else must commit political suicide by acting as your spokesman. I intend to remain in politics for many years. If you will hire Mike Callaghan to read the bale of literature you have just offered me, he will

tell me what it is you are trying to say and I will make use of it to the best of my ability. If this is not satisfactory, we are through. I am primarily a politician, as I have said before, and your fortunes are not allied to mine. I can do just as well in the present political gales by giving you hell."

It was a bold adventure, this speech, because I really wanted to work with these men, but I felt that it would be silly to crawl into their good grace by humiliating capitulation.

"What would Callaghan cost?" the chairman asked.

"I don't know," I said, "and if I were you, I shouldn't ask. He isn't eager for the job, I'm sure. Make him what you consider a reasonable proposal. Have in mind that you are making him associate counsel for this whole group. He has no license, but I believe he is one of the ablest constitutional lawyers in this country. For your present needs there is no other man even approximately his equal. He will not bargain with you I know. Make him your offer and he will either accept or probably not even answer your letter."

The committee authorized the chairman to bargain with Mike, and that ended our session.

A week later Mike again called on me. "What's going on around here?" he demanded gruffly, at the same time showing me the chairman's letter. It was a well-worded letter, and the salary named was

twenty thousand dollars a year; not very large when you consider the enormous interests at stake. I explained to Mike about the conference in the private car.

"But twenty thousand dollars!" he exclaimed. "What do these scoundrels think I am? A crook? Do they want me to bribe the legislature?"

Poor Mike had never garnered that many shekels in any one year of his entire czardom. It was an unthinkable sum to him. I tried to explain that it was a straight salary, and a modest one, for a very difficult job that no one else could do. And as I talked, I meditated upon the fact that Mike was now being urged to do for me the very thing I had done for him when first we became associated in politics. I had been his adviser in the franchise fight. Now he was to become mine—that is, if he accepted.

"Are you sure," he asked, "that they don't want me to buy anybody?"

An interesting light on Mike's mind, I think, but, to do him justice, he really hadn't employed bribery. What he had used was a club!

"I'm sure," I said.

He sat down, lighted a cigar, and pondered glumly. Finally he said: "You know that brother of mine?" I did. "Well, he gets twenty thousand dollars a year from a gang of damage-suit shysters for picking jurors. He knows which ones are always for big verdicts and which ones are pro-corporation and who is some-

body's cousin and all that kind of skullduggery. I've always regarded that brother of mine as a crook—just between you and me—so I don't take any twenty-thousand-dollar salaries. If they're honest, fifteen is plenty for any man; and if they ain't, I'd be quitting before I started, anyway."

I shall omit the details of our humorous negotiations; we compromised on fifteen thousand. And I went back to the legislature to face the fight of my life. There had been sufficient changes in its membership to leave me much less strength than I had had before. I should have to rebuild my fences. Also try to win my way into the good graces of a governor who hated Mike venomously and who would still think of me as Mike's first lieutenant. Whatever I did for the business interests would have to be done under cover. If my friendly attitude toward them were discovered, I should be ruined in spite of the fact that my purposes were not dishonest. I was hopeful, also, that I might again assist in drawing the appropriation bill. On the whole, I had assigned myself quite an armful of chores.

CHAPTER XXVII

My campaign for a strategic position close to the governor and on the right legislative committees was greatly facilitated by the militant course of the anti-prohibitionist bloc. They maintained that the governor had been elected solely to carry out his program for the regulation and higher taxation of corporations and not to make the state dry, although he had declared for both propositions in all his speeches. Seeing that they could not defeat state-wide prohibition if he insisted on it, they decided on a filibuster. Our legislative rules made it possible for the antis to break a quorum even though they couldn't defeat the bill. If all of them absented themselves from the chamber immediately after the session was organized, there would remain four members less than a

quorum, and no legislation could be passed. Of course the remaining members could send sergeants at arms after the missing members, but the latter could hide indefinitely. Here was a prospect to shake the resolution of any governor, and more especially a new one pledged to an extremely important program of legislation. I attended the anti caucus at which this scheme was decided on; then I asked for an interview with the governor and told him about it. He immediately sent for Rothwell, who was slated for speaker of the house, and asked him what he thought should be done. Rothwell was helpless. There was nothing he could do. I then told them that I would undertake to split the antis if Rothwell would give me the committee appointments I had had in the preceding session—judiciary and appropriations. Before agreeing, the governor wanted to know what my attitude would be toward his other legislative measures. I assured him that I was friendly, and that settled everything. We struck our bargain.

As I have explained before, I always played fast and loose with the prohibition issue or any other major issue that was too big for me to manipulate; I had no objection whatever to selling out either the wets or the dries in order to strengthen my power over appropriations. The governor was puzzled by my willingness to break up the threatened filibuster, in view of the fact that I represented a city constituency that had always voted wet by about five to one, but I as-

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sured him that nothing would induce me to dodge defeat by running away; the drys had won and were entitled to their victory. With the agreement made, I went back to the anti leaders and told them that I could not jeopardize my prospective influence on powerful committees; they should excuse me from the filibuster, since I was not absolutely necessary to its success. Thus they would have one friend in power after the filibuster had succeeded. Plainly, this was sound practical politics, and they agreed. Next I approached three wet members whose interest in the coming appropriation bill was greater than their loyalty to the wet cause. I suggested that they should start on the filibuster along with the others, but fail to get away. They could do this without being suspected of treachery, and in return I would help their pet measures through the appropriations committee.

On the appointed day the new session opened, Rothwell was elected speaker, and during the noon recess all the wets except me disappeared. My three confederates departed in an aged automobile which one of them owned. Ten miles south of the capital they stopped and set fire to this wheezing vehicle. Two hours later a sergeant at arms brought them back. They restored the quorum, and the filibuster had failed. As soon as the newspapers announced this fact, the other runaways straggled back to the capital to take their medicine.

Now, for the first time, I was willing to make a

speech on the prohibition issue. As long as the wets had been in the majority, I had avoided it, but now that they were scheduled to experience defeat and formally to pass into the minority, I very much desired to affiliate myself with them more openly. In politics there is closer cohesion among the members of a stubborn minority often defeated than there is on the victorious side. Years ago, when the prohibition issue was young and prohibitionists were always defeated, we really had many fanatical drys. Nowadays, if you will observe closely, you will find far more fanatical wets than drys. I could see that this change would be inevitable, in view of the temper of the wets, and I wanted to use it.

My course completely puzzled the antis, and none more than the weak-kneed among them who were quitting the ship, or trying to. The appearance of heroic sincerity was exactly what I wanted. Both sides agreed that there should be no limit to debate on the prohibition bill, and every dry member in the house asked for time to speak in order to place himself on record with the voters. When the leader of the wets brought forward his list of speakers, it comprised only eight names. Even the most militant were beginning to hedge. My willingness to be one of the eight was greatly appreciated in my own camp and not resented in the other, since they knew that they would win anyway and that my constituents were overwhelmingly wet. Thus I again succeeded in crossing the most

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difficult line of demarcation between hostile camps and garnering strength on both sides.

With the appropriations committee organized for work, I decided not to wait for the governor to send for me, as I had done during the preceding session. I went to him and told him that I would undertake to look after all of the items, such as traveling-expenses, secretaries, office supplies, miscellaneous funds, and so on, directly affecting his office. He thanked me and we drew up that part of the bill together. I decided not to sound him on the matter of pardons until I had set at rest any fears he might have as to my attitude toward his corporation laws, but it was obvious early in the session that we were rapidly moving in the direction of a working alliance.

The judiciary committee proved to be a hornet's nest. Rothwell, the speaker, did not really understand what the governor wanted in the way of corporation control, and so he let his loyalty run away with his common sense and packed the judiciary committee with corporation-baiters, all of them noisily loyal to the governor's program without understanding what it was. The governor himself was not a corporation-baiter, but for political purposes he sometimes had to remain silent when supporters necessary to his plans assumed that he was, and this complicated the situation for everyone concerned. It was up to me to struggle through this tangle and bring out of the committee

room legislation that the governor could approve without retarding the industrial development of the state. He knew the danger, better than anyone else, that his whole program might fail because of excessive misguided and uninformed enthusiasm. If the bills went too far, they would either wreck business or be held unconstitutional by the higher courts. Failure in either case would end his political career. He would have been alarmed if he had known that I was in close touch with the executive heads of the businesses about to be regulated; therefore I explained my solicitude for his pet measures as loyalty to his administration.

"But why should you be loyal to my administration?" he once asked me. "You fought me in the campaign."

"That isn't quite correct, governor," I answered. "What I really did was to support Darling. And, to put the matter still more accurately, I was trying to make a governor. I didn't succeed that time. But I am a practical politician, so I go right on trying to make a governor. This time you are the governor I am trying to make; you will want a second term. Perhaps after that you will wish to go to the United States Senate. Common sense dictates that I should ally myself with your ambitions. I have absolutely nothing to gain by opposing them."

"I wish more of my friends explained themselves in such terms," the governor remarked. "You make me

feel safer. And more optimistic, too, about that infernal judiciary committee. Rothwell appointed some lunatics."

There were fifteen members of this committee, and eight of them viewed me with suspicion; some because of my affiliation with Mike Callaghan's machine, others because I had not supported the governor, and nearly all of them because I was a wet. Of the seven who were not hostile, five were very friendly and two open to conviction on any point in question. Before the major bills should be considered, I wanted to break into that phalanx of eight. The opportunity came when one of them introduced a bill providing that no one who had served as attorney for a corporation within five years should be qualified for public office. It was an amazing proposal that would have banished virtually all lawyers from the state government, but campaigns such as the one that had just closed never fail to bring out similar freak bills.

The author was a young man who had graduated from college only two years before his election. His father, a wholesale grocer and staunch Democrat, had assumed that his son would be an ornament to the party and spent considerable money getting him elected. Oddly enough, the son also thought of himself as a staunch Democrat. In reality he was a half-baked Socialist. Not having a truly national radical party in this country, we are pestered with a left wing in both the Republican and the Democratic camps.

Evidently it had not occurred to this boy that the vast majority of our corporations were so small that control of the judiciary and political power would have been a burden to them. He thought that his bill was aimed directly at me and incidentally at other political bosses, that we were the tools of corporations and served them best by getting their lawyers appointed to the bench. When he read his bill, the other members of the committee guffawed. I managed to keep a straight face.

“Mr. Chairman, and gentlemen of the committee,” I said, “I move that the bill be reported to the house with the recommendation of this committee that it pass.” They stared at me, wondering if I had gone crazy. Three members jumped to their feet, demanding recognition in order to express opposition. I signaled a friend to second my motion, and he did so. Still holding the floor, I continued: “It is evident that this bill is about to precipitate heated discussion. That is not entirely fortunate, in view of the fact that the author is a member of this committee and that we are all going to work together throughout the session. I suggest that he be permitted to speak for his bill and then that we go into executive session to consider it, barring him from our councils. I also suggest that he agree to this as a matter of courtesy and without standing on his rights. I am eager to speak for this bill myself, and I assure you in advance that when you have heard me, you will vote for my motion.” Again

they laughed, but less heartily. We heard the author of the bill for half an hour. You can imagine about what he would say in behalf of such a measure; there is no use in repeating it. When the committee went into executive session, I was again granted the floor.

“Gentlemen,” I said, “this is the first bill introduced by a new member, who is twenty-five years of age. There can be no doubt of his honesty or his patriotism. Neither have we found occasion to complain of his industry. In a legislative body we ought to have the benefit of the wisdom and experience of men of ripe years but you know and I know that every legislative body in this country is a training school rather than a council of the elders. Election to membership in this house is one of the least of our political honors, not the highest. In my county the most desirable office is that of sheriff; the least sought after is the office I hold. We have no right to be impatient with this young man. He is not a fool and not a knave; the worst anyone can say of him is that he is simply inexperienced in statecraft. The choice is before us now either to humiliate him or give him a good-natured pat on the back.

“This is his first bill; as far as I know, it is his only bill. He made speeches in behalf of this measure during his campaign. Let’s give him, just as a matter of politeness, the satisfaction of seeing it favorably reported and duly placed on the calendar. You know that the recommendation of this committee is not a

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certain passport to final passage. You know and I know what the members will do with this bill. As a matter of fact, I think it ought never to come up, and that can also be arranged. Now let's agree to a discreet silence about this executive session, let's bring it to a close, readmit the author of the bill, and solemnly vote for or against recommendation."

Five minutes later the astounded author heard his bill recommended unanimously. He knew that I had done it, but not how. Nor did I tell him until the session was over; by that time he had gained sufficient experience to see the joke. The immediate effect of this little intermezzo, however, was to break the phalanx of eight and give me one more reliable supporter. I told him that the basis of my political power was fighting corporations. We were then ready to take up the governor's program of legislation, and, with Mike Callaghan camping across the corridor from my quarters at the hotel, equipped with an arsenal of information, I managed to suppress most of the high explosive measures. Watching Mike Callaghan delve into these bills on behalf of his corporate clients gave me no small delight, for if there was one thing more than another that would have made that old war horse happy, it would have been to fight on the other side. He had been a corporation-baiter so long that even when he and I and his clients were in intimate conference, he would use the old familiar epithets when addressing them.

“Look here, you crooks,” he’d say; “how about this levy on gross revenue? What would that do to your net?” Or “How about this House Bill 108? Looks to me like you traction highbinders are going to get stuck there just as hard as the steam-road wolves.” Such terms rolled out so naturally that no one ever resented them. Moreover, old Mike was rendering remarkable service. He had been allowed a generous expense account in addition to his salary and, having very little use for it, insisted upon playing host to as many of his employers as he could gather together for each meal, totally unmindful of the fact that they were also on expense accounts. For the first time in his life Mike was fairly wallowing in money, but he was about the cheapest and certainly the most industrious lobbyist for big-business interests that I have ever known. Throughout the long and tedious ordeal of that session, when so many corporation executives spent anxious days hoping that their businesses were not going to be ruined, Mike not only worked like a Trojan, but kept everyone smiling. That session gave him a lifetime job.

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## CHAPTER XXVIII

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On the whole, we did our work well, and the shifting of the tax burdens as well as the regulatory measures caused less disturbance than other states experienced when they passed through this phase of development. As the session drew toward a close, I went to the governor and asked him straightforwardly if he could grant me four or five pardons. My success during the preceding administration had made me famous and applicants simply couldn't understand why I was now doing nothing for them.

"Pick three that have merit," he said, "and I'll hear your argument." I did so and he granted me a whole evening, but he went to the bottom of every application before granting it.

"Now, that," he said, after affixing his signature

three times, "is the end of that business as long as I'm in office. There will be a pardon board and I shall follow its recommendations. I can't waste time this way."

He was a remarkably honest man, even when he played politics. He knew that I had received good fees for those pardons and that they were granted to repay his political debt to me for my help as a member of the judiciary committee; nevertheless, he couldn't conceive of granting pardons without knowing something about the cases. I put through the bill for a pardon board at his request and he appointed its members before the engrossing clerk's ink was dry. Eager to have done with my importunate clients and quit this field of operations, I went before the board as soon as it organized and submitted all the applications I had pending. My promptness led the board members to believe that there must have been an understanding between the governor and me. Eight of my applications received favorable action at once. It was the most profitable traffic in pardons anyone had ever engineered.

When the governor learned that the board's first eight recommendations were my cases, he held a secret inquiry in his office. This disclosed, of course, that I had simply dumped the applications and not tried to insinuate anything about my relations with the governor. All of us laughed and it was agreed all over again that I had retired permanently from that field of activity. I cite the incident to show how firmly the



tradition was established that governors paid debts with pardons. Many of them still do.

After adjournment I hurried home to look after a multitude of troubles in our local machine, and the governor went on a tour of inspection, visiting all the important state institutions. Before returning to the capital he visited me at my office. I shall relate the details of our conference here, before turning back to city politics.

"I've been finding out things about you," he said. "In every state institution I found men who didn't think it worth while to discuss their problems with the governor, because you are looking after their interests. You've got a good start toward a strong state machine. I thought I detected it during the campaign, but I wasn't sure. What are you planning to do with it?"

"I don't know, governor," I said. "I'm mixed up in state politics just as you are, and I'd rather be strong than weak. I've been doing all I could for able men I discovered working for the state. In return I have their friendship. What did you think of them?" He nodded vigorous approval.

"Playing politics is lots of fun, isn't it?" he finally asked.

"Yes," I agreed, "but it's dangerous, because it's habit-forming. The thought of being broke and still intensely interested in politics terrifies me. You don't have to worry about that because you have other re-

sources. I haven't. Aside from the necessity of making a living, I'd play the game very much as you do. Things being as they are, we play a slightly different game."

"I've been watching you," the governor said. "I don't mind your making a living, now that your town has been cleaned up. As for me, though, I haven't done half the things I want to do for this state and I need a shrewd politician for a partner—someone who will look after the fences while I indulge my fancies. Do you think we could work together?"

"Of course we can," I answered. "The proof is that we've been doing it."

"How'd you like really to cut loose and do big things?" he asked.

"Such as?" I queried.

"Well, to begin with, how about a new party?" He had been elected as an independent and therefore didn't bow down to party discipline, but he overlooked the fact that everyone knew his party affiliation; so his one outbreak of independence had not been alarming.

"Nothing doing on a new party," I said. "The more radical your program, the more important it is to invoke the names of Washington and Lincoln and sing hymns of praise before the Constitution. If you are going to abolish the Constitution, by all means do it in the name of constitutionalism. We haven't got the same government that the founders set up, nor do most of us subscribe to their principles, but we think

we do. You can lead us anywhere in the name of conservatism and under familiar banners, but if you admit that your radicalism is radicalism, you couldn't even collect land taxes."

"You're probably right," he mused. "All right, then, no new party. But a lively old one, eh?" I agreed heartily. In fact, I determined then and there to support him for re-election if it proved humanly possible to do so. He knew that this was my intention and did not press me for a definite pledge. He was a man of very active mind, constantly making news. That sort of man can be supported even when he makes serious mistakes, because he quickly brings something else to public attention and forces his unpopular actions into the background.

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## CHAPTER XXIX

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State affairs were never so important to me as control of our local machine, and I found a multitude of threatening problems confronting me. Foremost among these troubles was the fact that Percy Ball and his associates were grooming Herbert Dixon, one of the most respected and influential business men in the city, to run for mayor. Against him we had nothing better to offer than Jimmy Farrell, city attorney under the Draper administration, and, according to our traditions, destined to succeed him. He was a far better man than Danny Draper, but that is faint praise. Trained under old Mike, Farrell simply could not grasp my ideas for a totally new kind of machine politics and went right on fighting battles that I was glad to have lost and wanted forgotten. To be more

specific, he had permitted gambling and vice to return—not with glaring electric lights, as before, but they were with us again none the less. The underworld was thriving. Even the system of monthly arrests instituted by Callaghan had been revived. When I took him to task for this, he explained promptly—and, I am sure, truthfully—that he supposed my close association with the governor had no other purpose than to protect us against future intervention in our local affairs by state officials. Beyond question he would have been right had Callaghan still been czar; but I could see far more trouble in protecting concealed vice, the existence of which would have to be denied, than in permitting vice to flourish openly.

I could have clamped down on the Farrell policies with a resounding veto and depended entirely upon public works and my control of contracting companies to hold the machine together but for the fact that we had spent about all we could spend out of current revenues, and several large jobs would soon be completed—some of them just in time to throw men out of work during the campaign. A whopping big bond issue was urgently necessary if I were to have any hope of continuing my policies. I had therefore been paving the way with publicity favorable to such an issue. To get the voters to approve a bond issue with any of our men in the mayor's office would have been difficult at any time, but with a man like Herbert Dixon running and a big building program

in prospect, there was every reason to believe they would turn toward him.

Under the circumstances I resolved upon one of the boldest strokes of my entire career. I went to Herbert Dixon and told him that I was thoroughly out of sympathy with the policies foisted upon my machine by my subordinates during my absence in the state capital; that I believed the time had come for splitting the organization wide open and dividing the sheep from the goats. I would endeavor to bring with me all of the best elements to support him and leave the worst to support Farrell. The result of this, I explained, would be victory for him and annihilation for the defeated faction. We should then go forward with a strong political organization dominated by character and devotion to sound policies as well as shrewdness. The most popular spellbinder in our organization was Danny Draper, the mayor, and I told him that I believed Danny would join me in this insurrection. Dixon was amazed and delighted. Without even consulting his associates—he was an egotist and not conscious that he had any—he pledged me his confidence and co-operation in terms that made it perfectly clear that I should be his campaign manager. Thus far the maneuver was a brilliant success. Next morning I called on Draper in his office.

“Well, Danny,” I said, “your job as mayor of this great and thriving city is drawing toward a close. What do you intend to do next?”



"I don't know," he answered light-heartedly. "Hadn't even thought of it."

"If anyone else said that," I commented, "I'd think he was evading the question, but you're just that kind. Still, you've got to eat."

"Yeah—that's right."

"But you have no plans, eh?"

"Not a one. Something always turns up. I'm not like you. You're always planning a year or two ahead."

"You've never gone hungry, have you, Danny?"

"No—and never expect to."

"Well, I have; it makes a difference."

"Yes, I guess it would. I'll bet you came here today to suggest something!"

"That's right. I did."

"Much obliged. Let's hear all about it. Prop your feet right up on the chief executive's mahogany desk and make yourself at home. You listen like good news."

I propped one foot on the official desk, as requested.

"You've given us a very good administration, Danny," I began. "There's been plenty of pie for the boys in the organization and everybody's satisfied. You're popular and you're going out with banners flying. Naturally I don't want to lose contact with you. Politics being my business, I expect to work with you again in the future. That means we've got to find some way to form a profitable alliance so that you'll be on hand when opportunity knocks. I think I've got

the little plan we need, so I've come to outline it to you and get your O.K. on the dotted line."

"That's fine. So you think you've figured out some way for me to make a living until I get back into office?"

"That's it, Danny."

"Well, go ahead and make your speech while I applaud hysterically."

"You are going into the insurance business, with me as silent partner."

"I don't know a thing about insurance."

"That's all right; you don't have to; the chief clerk will run the business."

"Fine! I like that."

"You may not write much insurance, but there is a lot of business in writing bonds for city employees and other officials and contractors. I've been neglecting that source of revenue for years; in most cities of this size a contractor or whatever he may be knows where he ought to go to get his bond written. If he didn't know that much, he wouldn't have landed the job. But here we let that business stray all over the pasture, and it isn't right. When you open your office, everybody'll know where he ought to go. I don't think you'll have to wear out shoes chasing business. If it doesn't come in of its own accord, then I'm missing a guess."

"You've never done that. It'll come in."

"Yes, I think so. All right, then, you are going into

the insurance and bonding business until wanted elsewhere."

"Right! Already I'm beginning to think of myself as Demon Danny, the boy bonder. Up and at 'em every dewy dawn. How's that for a motto?"

"Pretty good if it lands you in the office in time for luncheon engagements."

"It will. By the way, partner, I hear that Herbert Dixon is going to run for mayor. He's got lots of money. Do you think he'll make it hard for us to put Jimmy Farrell across?"

"Yes, I do."

"You think he's going to run, then?"

"I know he is."

"I hate fellows like him."

"Why?"

"Aw, he's one of those professional good citizens."

"Yes, that's true."

"They have the same effect on me as a fly in my soup. I've been thinking up some wise-cracks to drop on him if he runs. He owns a wholesale drug business. Let's call him Lydia Pinkham."

"The trouble with that suggestion," I interrupted, "is that I'm going to manage Dixon's campaign."

"You're going to what?"

"Manage Dixon's campaign."

"How on earth can you do that when the Third Ward Club and our whole gang have already indorsed Jimmy Farrell? He's my city attorney."

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"I'm going to kick up a row with the Third Ward Club, Danny. I'm going to quit them cold."

"No!" the mayor gasped. "Quit 'em? What do you mean, quit 'em? Something's wrong with my ears. You didn't say you were going to quit the Third Ward Club, did you?"

"I'm going to have a row with the Third Ward Club and walk out on them in hot anger."

"Well, what the hell do you know about that, Geraldine! Papa is going to get mad at his own little Third Ward Club! What's the idea?"

"It's about time for a reform administration, Danny. We'll put in a business man pledged to make a greater and purer and better city. We're going to cut loose from wicked machine politics and do noble things that cost a lot of money and make juicy pickings."

"But why quit the organization with a program like that?"

"It's time for a big bond issue. You passed out lots of pie, Danny, but in very small slices and all for the rank and file. Your partner now wishes several fat slices of fruit cake with whipped cream."

"Then why on earth do you want to monkey with a reform administration? Can't the grand old Third Ward Club handle that better than anyone else?"

"No, Danny. There is always a back-fire after a big bond issue and I'd rather not have the organization

hurt by it. The best way to put over that sort of thing is to bring in a super-patriotic business man and then manage him."

"Well, do you have to get mad at the organization and walk out on them to put it over?"

"Certainly. That's the correct strategy to get control of the noble and self-sacrificing business man's campaign."

"Oh, yes; I see. When will this unfortunate row and secession take place?"

"This evening. That's why I came to you today. I want you to understand what we're doing. When it's all over, the boys in the organization will be swimming in gravy; but they're not so smart as they think they are, so I can't take them into my confidence. You've got loyalty, Danny; I can talk to you. We'll play the game together. When they see that you're sticking with me, they'll be uncertain about their own course, because you're their hero; and finally we'll all be playing together again in time for the juiciest cuts. Is that clear?"

"Absolutely; and if it wasn't, I'd play my bets along with yours anyway. How big a bond issue are you planning?"

"About seven millions."

"Wow!"

"Well, the city can stand it."

"Yes, I think so. There'll be some lovely gravy

when the contracts are awarded. Seven millions is a nice little handful of change. I wish we were going to handle all of it through the gang."

"Well, Danny, for all practical purposes that's what we're going to do. We'll all be smoking the peace pipe with our feet in the feed trough by the time the gravy flows. But in the mean time a red-hot campaign with the Better People backing Herbert Dixon. They can raise a juicy campaign fund when they get excited."

"Yes, I guess you're right; but I don't care much for 'em."

"I know that; you understand, though, that you're supporting Dixon?"

"Yes."

We shook hands on the bargain.

CHAPTER XXX

Originally the Third Ward Club had comprised a vacant retail store, a pool table in not very good repair, seventeen chairs, two oak tables, numerous decks of astoundingly soiled playing cards, twenty-seven members who paid dues of ten cents a month, and about fifty hangers-on who saved the dimes. The members and their friends were interested in politics, principally because politics appeared to offer jobs in the police and fire departments. As bait for these desirable prizes the members invited candidates for municipal offices to visit their clubroom and make speeches, which they did, using the pool table as a platform. One historic day a member was smitten by genius and suggested that the Third Ward Club should always hold a little primary of its own just before election day,

after which all of the members should vote as a unit. From that day on the Third Ward Club became a power. Within two years it had actually dictated the awarding of a fat contract for garbage removal. Thereafter candidates for membership stormed its portals.

There was nothing comparable to the Third Ward Club in any other ward; consequently, as it gained power, delegates from other wards were admitted. In short, the Third Ward Club became the political machine.

Its cabinet of seven members was in session when I entered the little back room, adding my contribution of cigar smoke to the heavy blue cloud that already floated above the council table.

"Good-evening, gentlemen," I said, pulling up a chair. The others nodded. I had interrupted a speech by a heavy-jowled orator of ample paunch, known to his fellow patriots as Butch. Butch liked to make speeches. They were an innovation so far as the council members were concerned, but Butch was well liked. In fact, it was his business to be well liked. Now that the state had gone dry, he represented the local bootlegging industry. All of them knew it, and yet, in the sense of being able to testify, none really knew it. Butch had lavished twenty minutes of fulsome praise upon the administration of "our Danny," who would soon retire, and now he was predicting a glorious future for James Peter Farrell. If there had been any ar-

gument among the members about Danny's successor, Butch would have been silent; but there was none, so he spoke with the fervor of a pleader who hopes to carry the day by his eloquence against powerful opposition. His audience chewed cigars, tipped their hats sometimes to the right, sometimes to the left, then forward to their eyebrows, then back; they crossed their legs, uncrossed them, and occasionally spat with more gusto than delicacy. They were bored, but at the same time they admired Butch for being able to make a speech. None of them could. Finally Butch closed with a dramatic gesture toward the smoke-befogged chandelier and sat down.

"Who do you represent here?" I asked abruptly. Butch blinked and his lips parted, but he decided not to speak; instead he looked around the table, appealing silently for a defender. None appeared. The question might have embarrassed any member present, since none carried credentials. I myself sat at the council table simply because I had been able to raise campaign funds, harmonize conflicting forces, and baffle political opponents; in short, I represented solely what was under my hat. Butch represented what was in his pocket, but that was not a matter to be discussed openly.

"I'll tell you what you represent," I persisted, while everyone present looked troubled. "You represent a lot of bootleggers. I'm not for any man you're for; and that goes for Farrell, too." There was a stir

around the table. This was decidedly dynamite. Everybody was supposed to be for Farrell. Moreover, everybody was supposed not to suspect Butch's business connections.

"What's the matter with Farrell?" asked Gus, whose last name is unimportant, since it was never used. Gus represented six rock-crushers, certain deposits of sand and gravel, and a lively business with the city government.

"I'm for Herbert Dixon," I announced, "and I want this club to support him for mayor because no bootlegger will."

"You're crazy," Gus growled. "Why, that highbrow has been panning the Third Ward Club ever since I can remember. We're going to nominate Jimmy Farrell and you know it. You're sore at Butch, that's all. Don't take it out on Jimmy. We've promised him the job. What's wrong between you and Butch?"

"Nothing so far as I know," Butch hastened to assert. "If I have given offence, it has certainly been unintentional."

"Your being here at all is offensive to me," I stated, "and when you make nominating speeches for one of our candidates, I don't like it. You seem to be the official spokesman around here lately, so I'm leaving. Good-night and good-by." Suiting the action to the word, I walked out, as Gus growled: "Well, I'll be damned!"

"If I did a thing out of the way—" Butch began.

They put their heads closer together and talked things over. Their conclusion, as I soon learned, was that they should go ahead with the program already outlined. Farrell would be their candidate. Butch must "kick in" with more cash and less talk. They'd let me alone, hoping, of course, that I would come back into the fold. It was unfortunate to lose me just at this time, because Farrell would need a platform and I always wrote the platforms. Surely I'd be back in time for that service. No one else had had much practice. I had never acted this way before; in fact, I was always the peacemaker. But if the worst came to the worst, Farrell could probably write his own platform. He was a lawyer. If I wanted to quit, there was no law to stop me; moreover, the organization had survived the loss of a far greater man—namely, Mike.

I went directly from the Third Ward Club to the home of Herbert Dixon; he had promised to wait up for me; he opened the door, himself. Dixon was a vigorous, pinkish, firm-jawed man, with bright blue eyes, who towered above my five feet and eight inches. Seldom have I known a man who suggested such tremendous power, and it was almost entirely physical; he was guileless as a child. Even in business I doubt that he could have come up from the bottom. He had inherited his wholesale drug business and the stocks that made him a director in half a dozen other corporations, including the Second National Bank. The only enterprise that he had ever started, so far as I

know, was a citizens' committee for the study of municipal government. This group had several times annoyed city administrations by employing auditors and sending them as unwelcome visitors to the city hall, but nothing very important had ever come of their disclosures. I had always expressed a friendly interest in this group and admiration for its founder. Since they did no great harm, why scowl at them?

"Well, I crossed the Rubicon tonight," I announced on being admitted.

"I'm more than delighted," Dixon said fervently.

"I kicked up a row," I continued.

"Yes?"

"I denounced the representative of our local bootleggers, who happens to be an influential member of the club's council. They were rather up in the air when I left."

"I'll bet they were!"

"Well, the net result, Mr. Dixon, will be confusion in the club's campaign management. Farrell himself is a fine man, but I'm not the only one in the organization who thinks its governing council could stand some fumigating. Quite a few of the members will follow me. I won over Mayor Danny today; he'll support you."

"Why, this is astounding!"

"No, they're not all bad, Mr. Dixon. We're going to do notable things in this campaign and come out of


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it with new alignments in local politics. I know the sheep from the goats."

"It does look promising."

"How much money have we got now?" I asked.

"About five thousand dollars."

"Well, we'll need more than that."

"Yes. I figured we might need even as much as fifteen thousand."

It was all I could do to keep from laughing. Fifteen thousand dollars would scarcely pay the postage bill in a hot campaign. However, I had seen other men of wealth initiated into the excitements of politics, and, once they got their feet wet, they had always been willing to wade in farther.

"I shall rent campaign headquarters tomorrow, if that meets with your approval," I told him. This was a surprise, but he nodded affirmatively. "I'm drafting a newspaper advertisement to go with your formal announcement," I continued. "It will be ready for your O.K. in two or three days."

"That's excellent," he said, brightening.

"I need a good photograph."

"A photograph?"

"Yes, for the campaign."

"I never should have thought of that, but fortunately I have a new one. I can see that the details of this adventure had better be left largely in your experienced hands."

He got the photograph for me; then we shook hands warmly and said good-night. All question as to the name of the manager of that campaign was settled! There remained, however, the problem of boosting the campaign fund from fifteen thousand dollars to something reasonable. I strolled through the streets, formulating plans and paying little attention to my direction beyond taking a general course toward a small, cheap shopping district. I liked to walk late at night through mean streets because their grimness seemed to help me toward an understanding of the jumble of petty ambitions, prejudices, loyalties, and especially fears that sway men on their way to the ballot box.

The hour must have been nearly midnight when a familiar light loomed up ahead, a dim light in a small show-window where bundles of tobacco leaf were on exhibition. This was the humble workshop of Adolph Richter, who turned out tailor-made cigars for a small clientele of particular smokers. Adolph and some of his cronies would be sitting in the workshop at this hour talking—probably talking socialism. Adolph was a pleasant, gentle, erudite dreamer of fifty years, who should have been a school-teacher or possibly a research worker. He was the guiding genius of the local Socialists and proud of his record of having been defeated for mayor in twelve successive campaigns. But Adolph was no firebrand. Each defeat found him with a few more friends and many more admirers. I stopped

at the door and looked in. Adolph was alone, sitting at his work-bench, reading a book, as I entered.

"Well, well, well," said Adolph, "if it isn't my perennial political enemy. I will bet that he has come here to beg me not to run for mayor because if I do his candidate will not have a chance." Adolph laughed heartily at his joke.

"Are you going to run again this time?" I asked, smiling.

"I certainly am going to run."

"That's too bad, Adolph. You can't spare either the time or the money. And both are wasted."

"Ah, how many, many great men have been told that! But if they had acted on the advice, where would the human race be today?"

"Honestly, Adolph, do you think this country or even this city will ever go Socialist?"

"Success I leave to fate. Duty is what impels an honest man, my friend. We must do our best and leave the outcome to destiny. If you knew more about socialism, you would have more faith, but you will not read . . . even when I offered you—"

"Adolph," I interrupted, "I think Karl Marx is the sorriest reading I ever struck in my life. Compared to him even Blackstone is thrilling. I don't see how anybody ever wades through it, aside from the fact that the fellow doesn't know what he's talking about."

"Now, there you go again. Instead of saying such silly things why don't you manage my campaign?"

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Everybody knows you are the best campaign manager in the world, but you will never win immortality for putting into office the funny little zeros you elect—like that clown of a Danny—while if you were to elect me, no history of the great revolution in government would be complete without your name.”

“That sounds well, Adolph, but you fellows don’t know anything about a campaign. You talk mass action but you are even more determined individualists than the rest of us. I couldn’t manage a Socialist campaign—even assuming that I wanted to—any more than I could herd five hundred squirrels. That’s why you fellows never get anywhere. I could tell you in fifteen minutes how to put on a blazing campaign, but you and your gang would never do it.”

“Well, what would you tell us? Leave it to me to say whether we would do it or not. That’s the only way you can prove your point.”

“Do you really want to know how to put on a campaign?”

“Most certainly I do. I am a candidate right now.”

“All right. Some day I’m going to tell you; some day when I don’t mind your putting on a real campaign. You’d get beat anyway, so naturally I’m not going to let you mess up one of my own campaigns.”

“Are you going to manage the Farrell campaign?”

“No, Adolph; the Dixon campaign this time.”

“What! You have broken with the Third Ward Club?”

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"Yes. Don't you approve?"

"No, I think not. Neither is any good from my point of view, but the Third Ward Club at least represents mostly poor people, while Herbert Dixon is a capitalist, a born capitalist."

I smoked thoughtfully and said nothing. I was beginning to feel tired. Finally I remarked that it was getting late and rose to go. Adolph objected.

"I'm coming soon again," I said, not meaning it.

"To advise me about my campaign?" he asked, ablaze with eagerness.

"No, Adolph, to tell you that Karl Marx is at least a quarter of a century out of date; also to tell you that we've got more sound, practical socialism in this country right now than Karl Marx ever dreamed of. I'm going to explain to you how and why an honest corporation is one of the greatest inventions of mankind, equal to constitutional government."

"Good!" Adolph exclaimed, smiling. "Come soon. I will enjoy that. It will make me laugh. But I wish you would tell me something about campaigns. I don't even get two-thirds of the known Socialist strength, and yet I am so popular that they will have no one else for a candidate."

"All right," I agreed. "Some day I will do that."

Adolph seemed to be thrilled. He actually pressed my hand as he said: "Good-night, my friend." An honest, lovable fellow.

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## CHAPTER XXXI

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I opened Herbert Dixon's campaign with the usual red fire and flourishes. The platform from which he delivered his first speech presented outstanding representatives of business and the professions. For the kind of man he was and the sort of campaign we planned, it was a tremendous success, but I could not suppress the amusing thought that if I had been on the other side, I should have known how to puncture it. Consequently I waited with some uneasiness for Jimmy Farrell's opening address and mass meeting. I attended that meeting and heard his speech.

To my astonishment, he had not even thought of the obvious things. For example, here he was, a young, rising attorney, son of poor parents, and supported principally by poor people, and therefore he



ought to have contrasted himself with Herbert Dixon, heir to the well-known silver spoon. Old stuff, to be sure, but always good. Instead of performing as a good demagogue, which was the only logical role for the machine candidate, he elected to appear disguised as a statesman—and this by stealing almost *in toto* the platform I had prepared for Herbert Dixon!

Dixon favored a seven-million-dollar bond issue; so did Jimmy. Dixon suggested a new city hospital and a new high school; so did Jimmy. Dixon thought the tax rate would be increased only the merest trifle and that that increase could be dispensed with five years hence; so did Jimmy. Same figures. Dixon was hotly in favor of a clean city. So was Jimmy, only he insisted that it was already clean. On the whole, Jimmy should have endorsed Dixon's candidacy and retired if that was the best he could produce in the form of issues. Still, there was a certain amount of sound sense in the scheme: they were planning to win on organization rather than issues. They had an organization and they figured that we didn't; also that I couldn't produce one in such a short time. And to oppose the bond issue—which would have been good politics—was more than their cupidity allowed.

As I left the auditorium, however, I was more than ever troubled by the problem of how to get a generous campaign fund out of Herbert Dixon with no one sticking barbs into him. Without a large fund I couldn't possibly bring about in so short a time the

organization needed to fight the old machine. And I felt that it would be the gravest kind of error to tell Dixon or any of his associates how large the machine's campaign funds were. Percy Ball was already hinting that he would like to know more about the business end of the boss business and I could see that Dixon, poor innocent, would be shocked if he suspected the total to be even a quarter of what it usually was.

Three weeks after I had opened campaign headquarters, my books showed total receipts of \$15,350, and disbursements of \$10,150. Contributions were coming in little dribbles of a hundred dollars each and Dixon was actually discussing with his associates the propriety of anyone else's contributing at all. He had also suggested that we ought to set a limit for the fund and make a budget. I had not yet been able to do anything for the humbler campaign field-workers who had elected to follow me; they were being sustained with promises. The time had come to act! I went to the bank and drew out five thousand dollars in twenty-dollar bills, which reduced our campaign fund to approximately nothing. Then I called on old Adolph Richter in his dingy little shop. I found him hard at work. His flying fingers continued to caress the strands of tobacco leaf as he looked up and exclaimed cordially: "My friend and customer! You are going to tell me about corporations! That is fine, because I have worked hard today, and now I would like to be amused. Go ahead!"

"I'm going to tell you how to put on a campaign," I announced.

"Ah! Then I listen with both ears." The flying fingers came to rest.

"First, Adolph, you must bring in famous Socialist orators from other cities and give them a grand bally-hoo."

"That costs money, which we have not got."

"Well, you can take up a collection; you always do, anyway."

"But the expenses would come ahead of the collection."

"I thought of that, so I am going to underwrite your campaign to the extent of five thousand dollars. Here's the money."

"What are we doing here!" Adolph exclaimed.

"I'm lending you five thousand dollars. The money will all come back; if it doesn't, the loss is mine. I underwrite the campaign and take the risk. Is that fair?"

"It sounds more than fair. . . . What else?"

"Well, first bring in distinguished speakers and pay their expenses. Next rent Memorial Hall for the remainder of the campaign."

"Will the five thousand cover that?"

"Easily. You fellows have never had a good hall and it's essential. You can't get crowds without Memorial Hall."

"All right. . . . What else?"

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"Hire Reggiardo's band for the remainder of the campaign."

"But that costs money!"

"The five thousand will cover it and you'll certainly get some money in the collections."

"Yes. . . . Now that I think of it, that is not impossible. What else?"

"Have a big mass meeting next Saturday night and call upon all the loyal Socialists to pledge themselves to eat nothing but soup and bread between now and election day and contribute all the money they save to the campaign. You take the first pledge."

"But that would be no hardship. I would do that willingly. As for the others, they would probably pledge, but I don't know whether they would keep the pledge or not."

"That doesn't make any difference, Adolph. It's good politics. Spectacular and sensational! Understand?"

"Yes, I think I understand what you mean. It sounds good. What else?"

"Place advertisements in the daily newspapers setting forth your cause."

"But that would cost terribly."

"Don't worry; the money will come in. If it doesn't you'll have to stop; but at least start."

"All right. Anything more?"

"Yes; bear down heavy on municipal ownership of everything you can think of. Don't stop

"I have often thought of that. Yes, why not the laundries, too?"

"That's right."
 "And they learn to sing socialist songs?"
 "Right."

"And they learn to sing socialist songs?"

“Have them come on the stage at the beginning of every meeting and sing socialist songs. Bring in kids from other town round here, too, and fill the stage. Announce where the visitors are from. Make a big fuss over them.”

"Frankly, Adolph, I don't give a damn whether you ever repay that loan; and if the program I've outlined calls for another thousand or so, I'll find it somewhere, provided this remains strictly confidential between you and me. Is that a fair proposition?"

"Hell, no! But I like you and I want your gang just once to have the time of their lives. That's all. You'll get beat this time just as surely as you were beaten the last twelve times. It's all in fun, Adolph. Herbert Dixon will be the next mayor. Go right ahead


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"Believe me, that is what I am going to do, because I am convinced that the people, the plain people, would do well to vote a Socialist ticket. There is something back of your offer, but it is a fair challenge and I accept it."

"That's right, Adolph. There is something behind my offer, but it is a fair and sporting challenge. I'm not cheating you."

"No, I don't believe you would."

"Thank you, Adolph. You're right. I wouldn't."

I gave him the money and declined his receipt for it. We sealed the bargain with a handshake and I returned to my office to telephone Dixon that we were broke again. He hurried to me with a check for ten thousand dollars. That was not enough to do anything with, so I twiddled my thumbs, made more promises, passed out a few ten-dollar bills as stop-gaps, and waited for Saturday night.

Adolph really had ability as an organizer, but it had never come to anything because he couldn't think in sums above ten dollars. Now for the first time he had a chance, and the results he showed, considering the short time at his disposal, were wonderful. I shall omit description of the happy, noisy, enthusiastic, singing mass meeting he engineered, because I want to present that picture through the eyes of Herbert Dixon and his associates rather than my own. An earthquake could scarcely have shaken them more profoundly.

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## CHAPTER XXXII

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Adolph's mass meeting was held on Saturday night, and at three o'clock on the following Sunday afternoon twenty-five solemn and thoroughly alarmed business men gathered in one of the banquet rooms of our principal hotel.

"I apologize," Dixon said, "for summoning you gentlemen on Sunday, but it appears that we confront an alarming situation. You must have read in your morning newspapers of the astounding mass meeting held last night in Memorial Hall. It was packed to the doors and hundreds were turned away. More than three thousand men and women pledged themselves with fanatical zeal to eat nothing but soup and bread during the remainder of this campaign in order that they may aid the Socialists financially.

There was one speaker from far-away New York City, another from Chicago. This city has not seen such fervor and enthusiasm in a political meeting for, I should say, ten years. I had no idea that the Socialist strength in this city even approximated what that meeting disclosed. While I have been endeavoring to arouse our people against the corruption of machine politics—and with only indifferent success—it appears that a campaign of vituperation against myself as a business man can stir up a great deal more popular interest. If they had attacked me as an individual, I should not feel that it concerned you; but I am attacked as typical of all of you—which, I believe, I am. We are all business men, conducting our affairs according to American traditions. These principles are now assailed with a show of strength that, frankly, alarms me. Why, they even cheered a demand for municipal ownership of laundries. Think of it! Laundries!

“I had determined upon a very economical campaign, as my friend and manager can testify. The books are here for your inspection. We have spent scarcely twenty thousand dollars, and even that sum is more than I had intended we should spend. Now, I think that the cause is more important than the man. God only knows where this Socialist money is coming from or how much they have. With your full knowledge and advice I am in favor of spending a much larger sum. I do not think we can afford to lose

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a campaign in which such issues as were presented last night mark the line of battle. Farrell, in my opinion, has ceased to be important. It is Socialism we are fighting."

Mr. Dixon paused and surveyed his audience.

"How much ought we to raise?" asked a voice.

"I don't know," Dixon replied. "I want advice as well as money."

"Well," said the voice, "there are twenty-five of us here. Suppose we each put up four thousand dollars. Your manager is an experienced man; he ought to be able to tell you whether that would be enough." All eyes turned toward me.

"I think a hundred thousand dollars would be enough," I said. "We are not going to do anything unusual, but, the way matters stand now, all of the usual things will cost a great deal more. The Socialists have the best band and the best hall for the whole campaign. We'll have to start at once organizing ward and precinct meetings to take the place of central mass meetings. That piles up expense. I think we'll have to canvass the whole city right away to determine as nearly as possible what the situation really is. The Third Ward Club can do that without expense through their standing organization, but we'll have to pay most of our workers. On the whole, though, I think we can get through on one hundred thousand dollars."

"And win?" asked the voice.

“Yes,” I answered, smiling. “When I say get through, I always mean to victory.” The crowd laughed heartily. They were feeling hopeful again. Fountain pens and check books were produced. In short, the battle was on; with money I could take over so large a part of the machine that Farrell, and not Dixon, would be without an organization. I proceeded to do that with all speed.

CHAPTER XXXIII

From time to time reports reached me from the inner council of the Third Ward Club, telling of panic. I waited until five days before the election and then undertook my final coup.

The guiding geniuses of the Third Ward Club convened in special session for my visit, the purpose of which had been announced "to present a matter of importance." Mayor Danny and Gus, the rock-crusher impresario, had acted as intermediaries. Gus had business relations with one of my contracting firms. The clubroom was appropriately draped in the usual cigar smoke for this occasion. One familiar face, however, was absent. By request, Butch didn't attend, although he expressed eagerness, I was informed, to affect a reconciliation.

I greeted the assemblage as calmly and cordially as though our former relations had never been interrupted. In fact, I made it a rule never to be embarrassed and never to show anger, regardless of what happened. The council members and Jimmy Farrell nodded acknowledgment of my greeting, but several of the lesser candidates did not.

Speaking as though what I said might interest them casually, I said: "I suppose you know you're licked." They stared. "My canvass of the precincts," I continued, "shows Dixon by about seven thousand. What does yours show?" No answer. Their canvass was not worth much. Mine was also imperfect, but it did indicate a seven-thousand majority.

"What's your proposition?" Gus finally demanded.

"That Farrell withdraw at once in favor of Dixon," I replied.

"Why should he?" Gus asked. "We've been licked before and lived through it. Why should he turn tail?"

"Before I tell you," I said, "I want you to clear your minds of the notion that I'm a traitor to this organization. At least give me the benefit of the doubt, and then you'll be able to understand better the proposition I'm making. Farrell never had a chance from the start. I got Dixon into this in order to get support for a bond issue. Now, we're going to have Dixon and a bond issue, so the time has come for this organization to absorb his administration. In order to make

that possible I had to scare the gizzard out of him. I'm doing it with old Adolph. You needn't laugh. I'm doing it, I tell you. He hasn't seen the canvass figures and he doesn't know he's elected. He's scared green and wants help. Let Farrell make a red-hot speech and lay his candidacy on the altar of patriotism—and Dixon will never forget it. Also Farrell will be sitting pretty for some future occasion. As matters stand, he's in the discard and you're all in the discard. What you want to do is climb back on to the band wagon. I've put the ladder out for you, but you've got to use your own judgment. Dixon is going to be mayor, and his administration is going to spend seven millions of dollars. You can be friends with that seven million or you can fight it—this is the last chance for any of you. As for me—I'm sitting where you usually find me. I'd like to have my friends along, fellows that I've worked with before. Anybody coming?"

Farrell withdrew—eloquently. Everybody withdrew. When I told Dixon about it, he began to regard himself with awe.

"I see the hand of God in this," he said. "I started out, very uncertainly, with no greater hope than to effect a few minor reforms. But such was not the divine intention. It fell to my lot to bear the standard in a battle to save this city from the shame and disgrace of a Socialistic administration. I believe, now, that we are going to win. Indeed—while I say it humbly—that God is on our side."

Not knowing how to discuss public affairs in such terms, I maintained a discreet silence.

In spite of his confidence in so powerful an Ally Dixon remained in campaign headquarters until half-past eleven o'clock of election night, although the returns were decisive within an hour after the polls closed. It occurred to me that this would be a good time for Jimmy Farrell to appear, so I sent for him. Dixon grasped his hand melodramatically and said: "This is an inspiring victory. And, my boy, I believe you saved the day. I shall not forget your patriotic sacrifice nor the sacrifices of other men who ran on your ticket. They are evidently far better men than I had imagined. But especially I am under obligation to you, for you led the way. The gallant manner in which you faced this issue was glorious."

Mayor Danny and I were in a corner of the room bending over a battery of adding machines on which totals were being compiled. "Listen to him," Danny whispered, grinning. "By God, when they get into this game, they're all alike. . . . By the way, have you heard from Adolph? Did their collections pan out?"

"No," I said, "but I telephoned him to forget the loan and I covered a deficit of eighteen hundred dollars. He's happy, though. They had a swell time."

"And got three thousand more votes than they polled two years ago with a campaign fund of thirty cents," Danny added. "Poor devils!"

To the end of his life Adolph harbored the pleasant suspicion that I might possibly be, after all, 'way down underneath, a Socialist and I know that he often voted for me. The most interesting aspect of this campaign, however, was the proof it furnished me of the abysmal ignorance about politics of leading citizens. And I believe that they could be frightened into hysterics again today by the same absurd means I used.

CHAPTER XXXIV

The business of being a boss is strenuous and exciting enough under any circumstances, but when I found myself in the position of next friend to a reform administration, as well as secretly the titular head of the machine, it seemed to me at times that the dual rôle called for a superman. No chief executive is able to do the complete house-cleaning job he contemplates when campaigning for public office, but Dixon found himself so entangled that he didn't even get rid of Hinkley, the chief of police. That should have been done promptly. A combination of accidents prevented it. Dixon offered Farrell any job he wanted, but I had already spoken for Farrell's services in connection with a little scheme of my own. Therefore, not needing a job, Farrell eloquently intervened for his friend

Hinkley, and Dixon appointed him without consulting anyone. The commission had been issued before I knew that such a possibility existed. That meant that the old alliance between vice, gambling, and the organization would continue. The justices of the peace liked it so well by this time, and had prospered so marvelously, that they had both the will and the power to fight hard for its continuation. They were all three definitely allied with the machine now and were to be found almost daily in the clubrooms of the Third Ward Club. In addition to this combination our city was still wet, although the state had gone dry. I need not waste words telling how different these bootlegging purveyors of alcoholic beverages were from the former saloon-keepers. We were rapidly coming to have a real criminal element, something we had never had before. Even in the red-light district—I learned with horror—some of the houses were now owned and operated by male proprietors. The business of gaining permission to remain open was becoming too complicated for the women.

Dixon retained his faith that I could do absolutely anything he required, and, since he could accomplish almost nothing himself, he called for my services never less than once daily and occasionally five or six times. For his own protection I had to arrange a code with my telephone operator so that people in my office wouldn't know how often he called. When she

announced: "Judge Smith on the wire," that meant the mayor.

True to his campaign promises, Dixon brought to the mayor's office precisely the methods he had used as managing director of his drug firm. He was vigorous, always meticulously shaved, massaged, groomed, in the pink of physical condition. Routine swept across his desk as though propelled by a blast fan. Unlike dawdling Danny he could discharge all of it in an hour daily. There was one thing wrong with his efficiency, however—the business that found its way to his desk was never of great importance. A tacit conspiracy kept the other kind away from him.

Eventually he began to suspect as much and reached out for some of these troublesome matters, but to lay hands on them required a kind of skill his experience had never taught. He called for reports and received essays designed for publication. He gave orders that failed of execution for reasons that could just as well have been explained in advance, but never were. Briefly, he found himself entangled in a maze of tradition, lethargy, passive resistance, and sometimes just plain ignorance. Not being able to overcome this morass he turned—probably for entertainment as much as anything else—to giving audience to anyone who wished to visit his office and tell him things. When that news spread, his anteroom was full every day and all day. One odd-lot of rumor received in this

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manner he turned over to me for investigation. It involved the police department, so I summoned Hinkley to my office.

"Chief," I said, "someone has complained to Mayor Dixon that one of your traffic cops is taking orders for booze right in the middle of the street where he directs traffic, and that after hours he dons civilian attire and delivers the aforementioned booze. I rather admire the delicate little touch of civilian attire for deliveries, but in spite of that mitigating circumstance the whole performance is what I should call rough, if the charge is true. And now I want to ask you: is it true?"

Hinkley guffawed until he had to hold his sides.

"Do you remember who made the complaint?" he asked, still laughing.

"I don't know the man," I said, "but, if I recall correctly, the mayor told me his name is Weston."

"I thought so; I thought so," Hinkley chuckled. "Well, we'll chase him out of town. And then I'll tell Pete to quit his little graft. It's a tough break for Pete."

"Chief," I said severely, "I don't like this at all. I called it rough, but that doesn't begin to describe it. You and I are practical politicians, so I'm not going to waste time talking about the impression such a state of affairs would make if it were publicly aired; all I'm going to tell you is that, from the standpoint of practical politics alone, it's insane. The one thing

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that's likely to save an explosion this time is that the performance is so outrageously bold it sounds impossible. That's the Mayor's impression. Clear this up right away and have it good and clear when you make your denial to the mayor. What on earth prompted you to permit—"

—"Aw," the Chief protested, "something had to be done for Pete. He's got seven little kids, and his wife's sick and he's had to bring his old-maid sister to take care of them, and his wife's sister is a widow with three kids. Her husband—you may remember him—was Officer Peterson, one of the best we ever had on the force. A seventeen-year-old kid bumped him off last year in a hold-up. Remember the case?"

"Yes, I remember it. But where does this Pete get his whisky?"

"Why, we take it away from one of Butch's clients. We knew that Butch had got himself in bad with you during the last campaign, so we fall on him once in a while. And then here came the mayor appointing a special prohibition squad that was expected to do something, so I sicked 'em on to one of Butch's bootleggers. This fellow gets in a little stuff that isn't half bad even after it's cut, so we take a load away from him now and then and let Pete have some. Butch told me I'd better stop or he'd have Weston complain to the mayor. Weston's one of Butch's hired hands. I can get rid of him all right. . . ."

"But how on earth," I interrupted, "do people

find out that they can buy whisky from a traffic cop?"

“Why, Pete has a list of the customers who were to receive this whisky in the first place. We captured that with the whisky. There’s only about eight or ten of them, and all good sports, so Pete just tipped them off that they could get it from him for less money than from their bootlegger, when he has it, and they give him the high sign for a case or two as they ride by his corner.”

"I should think they'd resent that sort of business."

"Naw, they think it's a good joke. Why should they care? They get their whisky, don't they?"

"People are becoming queerer every day," I mused.

"Yep," the chief agreed. "And this special prohibition squad is about the queerest thing in town. Nearly all these complaints that the mayor gets in person and then refers to the special squad have got something back of them. Take little Vittorio Peruggia's restaurant, for instance. He only served about one hundred meals and two or three gallons of wine a day; even the lieutenant didn't collect from him; all Vittorio paid for protection was twenty-five dollars a month to the cop on the beat. Well, the mayor gave us a complaint, so we had to raid Vittorio and put him out of business. Now I'll tell you where the complaint came from—his landlord."

"His landlord!" I exclaimed.

"Sure! His landlord got a better offer for the place;

another fellow wanted to put in a much classier restaurant and was willing to pay twice as much rent. Vittorio wouldn't get out, so his landlord sent a complaint to the mayor and had him raided. Now he's out. This reform administration is certainly a big help to some people."

"Has the new fellow opened up?"

"Yes."

"Why don't you fall on him like a ton of brick?" I suggested.

"Can't do that," was the prompt reply. "He's got friends that are close to the mayor. They tell Herbie that he's dry, because they want that place for themselves. And while the mayor wants the town dry, he can't fight everybody at the same time."

"I wish we could clean out that whole nest of rats," I said.

Hinkley agreed with me heartily, but for reasons of his own.

"We ought to do that along toward the close of the Dixon administration," he said. "It would end reform administrations for a long time. People don't want this town closed. They just don't know what they want right now, but close it for them once, tight as a drum, and the old Third Ward Club marches right into office with Jimmy Farrell."

Our conference was interrupted by a telephone call from the mayor summoning me to his office at once. I dismissed Hinkley and hurried away. The mayor

was very much disturbed and began talking before I had closed the door behind me.

"Handley and his first assistant, Meadows, have just resigned," he said, "and I am informed that those two men are the best building-inspectors this city ever had. What little personal experience I have had with them confirms that report. We have, as you know, very complicated city and state codes with reference to building, and I count it a serious loss for them to resign just at this time, when we have millions of dollars' worth of construction scheduled under the new bond issues. Both Handley and Meadows strongly recommend Elmer Worth, who seems to be next in command of that department. What do you know about him?"

"I'd appoint any man they recommend," I advised, "and more especially I'd be glad to find Handley's successor right in the department. That is good for morale and in keeping with your general policy of promoting competent men who have no political pull."

"That's right; that's right. Well, I'll make the appointment at once—most regrettable that Handley and Meadows should leave us right now. I tried to talk them out of it. Too bad we can't pay them more. . . . Salaries are fixed by law, though." Dixon was fond of the phrase "fixed by law."

"What are Handley and Meadows going to do?" I asked. I knew, but I wanted to hear what they had told him.

“Going into business for themselves,” he said; “some sort of special advisory work for contracting firms. I suppose there’ll be lots of business for them now. The work called for by the city bond issues alone would carry them for several years.”

I agreed—and silently checked off as now accomplished the most important maneuver necessary to collecting my share in connection with the city’s expenditure of its bond-issue funds. The plan was simple, legal, and practically foolproof. I had secretly financed Handley and Meadows to open an office; they would advise contractors with regard to the innumerable state laws, city ordinances, rules, and regulations affecting work to be paid for with the city’s funds. Attached to this office would also be the former city attorney, James Peter Farrell. These three men would render a useful and valuable service, but their fees would be somewhat higher than those usually charged by architects. Ten per cent, to be exact. Architects charged only five per cent at the most for inspection. But I knew what it meant to have Handley and Meadows walk out of the department over which they had so long presided, to be succeeded by loyal lieutenants whom they had trained. Henceforth they would exercise powerful influence there in addition to knowing the business better than anyone. Word could easily be passed round with adroit indirectness that every contractor whose bid was accepted by the city should employ this new firm. We wouldn’t have

to say, "or suffer interminable annoyances." They'd have imagination enough to guess that. There was to be no favoritism in the awarding of contracts, however, and this would be a welcome innovation; eventually an economy for all concerned. Every bid must include the required ten-per-cent fee and that left all of the firms on a fair footing. They vastly preferred this to such previous forms of graft as buying favorable consideration of their bids. In fact, my plan was regarded as a commendable movement toward square dealing and there was no disposition anywhere to complain. Handley and Meadows had been financed liberally and they knew they could count on my influence to bring them business. Therefore the fact that I was a silent partner in the firm, sharing its profits, seemed entirely reasonable both to them and to me. This sharing would reduce their profits to about the usual fees for inspections. And most assuredly they were going to do their work well. I had made it very clear to them that they would not be called upon to do anything dishonest.

It was with considerable satisfaction that I heard what the mayor had to say and he seemed to feel relieved on hearing my advice. He leaned back in his chair and clasped his hands behind his head.

"I think I'm beginning to see why a man like myself doesn't accomplish more in this office," he finally said, breaking a long silence. "Lack of experience, that's what it is. When I was elected, I thought that

by this time I would have brought about a revolution in the city hall. I can do it in any business. But this is different. Business experience isn't worth a great deal here. So now I'm looking toward the future. This is a great city; it's going to be a much greater one. Municipal government is one of the cancer spots of our national structure. You know how keenly I feel on that subject. I can see that I am not going to accomplish one-fourth of the reforms I had hoped for—but I have a son. He's just one year out of law school, a fine boy. I want him to study these municipal problems that confront us here. I want him to start at the bottom. That's the all-important thing—to start at the bottom. That's what men like myself never do—and that's why we find ourselves checkmated. I want that boy to start his political career as a justice of the peace. Yes, sir, a justice of the peace. Now, you put me in here—oh, yes, you did, I know that well enough. Make my boy a justice of the peace. You can do that."

"Why not send him to the legislature?" I countered. "That would be much easier."

"No, a lad his age has no business making laws."

"Well, couldn't we fit him into the city hall somewhere right away?"

"No, I am opposed to nepotism; I appoint no relatives; moreover, I want the boy to feel that he is standing on his own feet."

"Why not elect him city attorney next time?"

“He isn’t ready for that. Moreover, there are lower strata of politics in a city of this size that I simply know nothing about, and the practical reformer of the future must understand those strata through having come into direct contact with them. This is of vital importance. My mind is made up. I want that boy elected justice of the peace in the forthcoming county and precinct elections. Will you do that for me?”

The mayor smiled confidently. I may have had the appearance of a man suddenly stricken ill. I don’t know. Difficulties were certainly coming in flocks just then. I saw how lightly Herbert Dixon estimated the office of justice of the peace and I knew how impossible—not to mention foolhardy—it would be to explain that these apparently humble offices were the principal source of power for a political machine with which I was not through, by any means. Dixon was lightly asking for a stone out of the arch. But I couldn’t very well say no, because his administration would soon be spending millions of dollars. That was what I had elected him to do, and here we were with all plans working beautifully. Nothing must mar their functioning now.

“I’ll look into it,” I said, “and let you know. Maybe it can be arranged.”

The mayor smiled. My habit of understating my power amused him very much.

“Look into it,” he repeated, mocking me. “Why, you could order a thing like that by telephone.”

CHAPTER XXXV

If Dixon had been a stronger, wiser, more resourceful man, I should have attempted to talk him out of this silly resolution, but I knew at once that it would do no good. He had the characteristic bullheadedness that weak men of his type mistake for steadfastness of purpose. The great arts of compromise and patience they never learn. There was nothing to be done, under the circumstances, but browbeat the Third Ward Club's council members into granting the request. I saw plenty of fireworks ahead, but again it was better to be at outs with them temporarily, if that course should prove necessary, than to compromise my position with the mayor. I sent word that I wanted a special meeting of the seven men who constituted the senate, or, more properly, the steering committee.

They gathered in the familiar back room, while in the larger clubrooms adjoining some thirty or forty men were playing cards, pool, and billiards, or standing at the bar drinking. The place had never made any pretense of closing its bar.

"Gentlemen, we're in trouble," I said, by way of opening the meeting.

This was a puzzling and most unexpected announcement, for all had been going well under the new administration. Two members of the council pulled their hat-brims down closer to their brows and studied my face critically.

"What's up?" asked Gus.

"Mayor Dixon wants his son, Owen, elected justice of the peace in the coming elections."

"Where does he live?" asked the paunchy individual known as Joe, whose chief usefulness rested upon the fact that he could speak a little Italian. We now had a rapidly growing Italian colony that voted solid at his request. We called him Joe as a joke because of his Italian following. His name was Aloysius O'Finerty.

His question was very much to the point, because Owen Dixon's address would determine the precinct in which he resided and thus disclose the name of the man he would have to oppose.

"He lives with his father," I answered.

"Hu-u-um," grunted Gus. "Precinct One. That's tough. That's Bass's precinct. He can't have Bass's

job. Let's send him to Congress and get him out of the way; Congress don't mean nothing to us."

"He won't take Congress," I said.

"Well, I'll be damned!" from Butch. "I thought all those hymn-singers liked Congress. What about state senator? That's a cute little bouquet; let him have that."

"We're getting nowhere," I said impatiently. "Mayor Dixon wants the boy elected justice of the peace and nothing else. I don't have to tell you that Dixon is bullheaded. There's no use trying to talk him out of it. So it's got to be done."

"Well, it just can't be done," Gus announced, and smote the table with a ponderous fist. "You know just as well as I do how Bass got there and why he's kept there. If it hadn't been for his testimony two mighty good men would be in the penitentiary right now. We promised Bass the job for life. How are we going to throw him out when he plays the game with the gang like he does?"

"It's got to be done," I repeated. "Nobody ought ever to be promised a job for life."

"Can't you saw off something like district judge on this young squirt?" Butch suggested. "He's a lawyer, isn't he?"

Ignoring Butch's question I stated firmly: "Owen Dixon is going to be justice of the peace."

"Do you realize that Bass's job is worth eighteen thousand dollars a year?" Gus asked.

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"Yes—but it can be trimmed down, I'm here to warn you."

"How?"

"Don't forget that Herbert Dixon is elected on a reform ticket and is ready to clean up this town. If the cops pull off about twenty raids of gambling-joints, speak-easies, and disorderly houses, Bass's job won't be worth quite so much. He can either get out or I'll ruin his graft. Mayor Dixon has got to have what he wants or my position is in danger. That's all there is to it. Bass is a bum and a perjurer, and we all know it. He's had that job for six years; he ought to be well fixed. Anyway we can get him something else. . . ."

"Not something worth eighteen thousand," Gus objected. "Jobs like justice of the peace aren't lying around that loose."

"It's up to you fellows to come through on this," I threatened. "You know where I'm sitting and what I can do. Now let's have your verdict and no more rag-chewing."

There was a furtive exchange of glances under well-shaded eyes; nearly everyone present wore his hat. I saw instantly that the decision was against me, but I had come prepared for either success or failure. A boss never has his back to the wall if he knows his business.

"All right," I said calmly without waiting for a

declaration. "We understand each other. Good-evening." And I left.

Later I learned that the council decided after a minute or two to lay the matter before Bass himself. Bass was in the clubroom playing poker. He was a man of unusual appearance; his face seemed to be almost as flat as a board, although it comprised the usual assortment of eyes, mouth, nose, and cheeks. The cheek bones, however, were more prominent than his nose; the eyes were dull, hard, and unfeeling, and often seemed not to be in focus. They were the alarming, unimaginative eyes of a man capable of horrible cruelty. Bass was summoned into the council chamber, and the situation explained to him.

"So the boss thinks he's going to double-cross me, eh?" he said. "Well, he's got the wrong man this time. Him and little Owen Dixon better mind their own business or they'll start home some night and never get there." Without more ado he walked out of the room and resumed his poker game. Beside him sat his crony, familiarly known as Greasy Nick.

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## CHAPTER XXXVI

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Again I sat in conference with Chief of Police Hinkley. Two weeks had passed since the demand that Owen Dixon be elected justice of the peace had been refused.

"Well, you see what happened," Hinkley was saying. "The court threw out all those gambling cases. I told you—"

"But you didn't have search warrants," I objected. "Of course the court would throw out the cases. You ought to have had warrants."

"Aw, come to life," pleaded the chief, grinning. "You know I wouldn't have found anybody in those gambling-houses if I'd got warrants. Who issues warrants? The justices of the peace, don't they? And who collects graft from the gamblers? Why, the justices

of the peace and the constables. It's always been agreed that that's their territory. No wonder they're sore about these raids. They've got a right to be sore."

"That's neither here nor there," I interrupted. "The point is that we've got to make life a burden for Bass so he'll compromise on another job. If the raids don't succeed—and it seems that they don't—we've got to try something else."

"What?"

"I'm about to tell you, chief. Listen carefully. The way Bass and the other justices collect is this: they shake down all these people at regular intervals; each victim gets a receipt showing that he or she paid a fine of two fifty and costs. The state gets the two fifty, and the justices and constables and prosecutors divide the remaining twenty-two dollars and fifty cents as fees. Now, all of the fees named would be legal if the victims really were jailed and tried, but they aren't. All that happens is that the constable goes to the proprietor with a flock of receipts, one for each person in the place. The proprietor pays the total bill and assesses each person named. But the books of the justices of the peace have to show the fees in detail and—mark this!—they show that each person was arrested, jailed, admitted to bail, released, and finally tried and convicted. They show that three witnesses were summoned in each case and there is mileage charged for summoning each witness. They also show that the constables testified, because they get their

witness fees, too. All of these accounts are sworn. Now, the thing for us to do is take this whole matter before the grand jury. All we've got to do is find some of these people who have paid twenty-five dollars every month and get them to tell the grand jury whether they were ever taken to jail or to the courtroom. That'll turn the trick and we'll be rid of Bass."

"What makes you think these people would testify?"

"I shouldn't think they'd be very fond of Bass."

"Well, that's where you miss a guess. They may not be very fond of him, but they'd let us burn off their feet before they'd testify against him. He may rob them, but he also lets them live. They know that better than anyone. They won't testify."

"All of them might not, but you can get four or five, can't you?"

"Yes."

"Well, get them."

"They'll be bumped off just as sure as they testify."

"I don't care. What good are they?"

"None. If you don't care, I don't."

I lighted a cigar while Hinkley strolled to the window and looked down on the passing throng.

"Greasy Nick is across the street," he said. "That's the third time I've seen him over there today. He's watching you. Do you know what that means?"

"Yes. I'm watching him, too. I've got a new chauffeur. He's a state trooper. I've got a new yard man.



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He's a state trooper. I've got a new client who sits out there in the anteroom and waits for me all day long, but never comes in. He's a state trooper, too. I've got a pistol in my pocket. I may shoot Greasy Nick. And if I do, it won't make any difference whether I'm convicted or not. The governor is a friend of mine."

"Is Owen Dixon guarded?"

"Yes."

"Is he campaigning any? I never see him or hear anything about him."

"Well, Hinkley, you wouldn't. He seems to do most of his campaigning around country clubs."

"Boob, isn't he?" Hinkley asked.

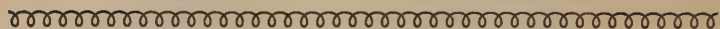
"Politically, yes, but a fine young man. I like him. I wish he'd let politics alone. I think he wants to marry that Harrison girl he goes around with."

"Well, why doesn't he? He's got plenty of money and so has she."

"He hasn't got any more money than his papa gives him, chief. And papa doesn't want him to get married. Not yet, anyway."

"Lord, I wish papa would make a wholesale drug-gist out of him before somebody gets shot."

"So do I, but papa doesn't see it that way and it isn't up to us to give papa too many armfuls of information about the city in which he's spent his life. Our business is to get along with papa as long as he's useful."



"Right! Well, I'm on my way. I'll get your witnesses, but God help them after they testify. And look after yourself, too."

"Do you think it would be safe for young Dixon to address a political meeting?" I asked.

"Sure. Only tell him to be careful on the way home. I'll send a plain-clothes man with him."

"Thanks, chief."

CHAPTER XXXVII

Owen Dixon had just delivered his first political speech. As strange an audience as ever jammed a hall applauded him wildly. Two hundred and twelve of these enthusiasts were of the junior country-club set or local alumni of the state university—some men, some women. The remainder I sent there to fill the hall—and they looked the part. The hall seated two thousand. Newspaper reporters innocently wrote that this crowd was a great outpouring of people “from all stations of life”—“an inspiringly democratic tribute to a worthy young man willing to begin at the bottom of the political ladder.”

“Keep your eyes open,” I warned the man at the wheel of Owen’s automobile as the candidate and I bade each other good-night. Inside the limousine the

detective I had had assigned to take care of the young patriot was lowering the glass windows. Owen Dixon stepped into the car and sat down beside him. We had thought it better not to warn him of the dangers; he was delighted to have an armed guard, considering it merely an honor.

"If anything happens," said the detective, "you flop on the floor. They'll be looking for you, not me or the chauffeur."

"I certainly will not," the astounded candidate replied hotly. "I'm not afraid."

"Suit yourself," the detective said. "If you don't drop, I'll drop you with one on the jaw. I'm responsible for getting you home." Owen looked at him wondering if he was drunk. And the car started. In due time I received a detailed account of what happened to them on the way home.

The car had gone about ten blocks and was on a quiet, tree-lined, residential street when the man at the wheel reported: "Car following us, Tom."

"I see it. Show some speed." Thirty seconds later the speedometer registered fifty miles an hour. At this terrific pace they rode for ten minutes, the pursuing car slowly gaining.

"Ready, Tom?" asked the man at the wheel.

"Ready."

Suddenly the brakes clutched and the car almost stood on its head. Owen Dixon found himself sprawling on the floor. A moment later the pursuing car

came abreast, having swerved just sufficiently to avoid a collision. There were two men in this car, the driver and, beside him, Greasy Nick, carrying a pistol in his hand. Young Dixon's guardian waited to see no more. He fired twice. One bullet pierced the front tire, and the other the rear. A moment later the car swayed drunkenly, lurched toward the curb, struck a tree, and turned over.

"Shall we stop?" asked the man at the wheel.

"No, I saw him. We got the right one. Let's just keep right on going."

What remained of Greasy Nick and his companion was carried to the morgue in a basket. The companion never was identified. Even Bass didn't know who he was. Bass had left the job in Nick's hands. The police investigated and determined that the two men came to their death as a result of an automobile accident that had occurred while they were drunk and speeding—which was satisfactory to all concerned. These details were reported to me that night and I waited with considerable anxiety to hear from Mayor Dixon, but he never mentioned the incident, nor did Owen. I don't know why. My guess is that the youthful candidate did not report the matter to his father. He may have thought it a manly gesture to say nothing.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

In spite of Hinkley's ready expression of willingness to find four gamblers who would appear before the grand jury I doubted his sincerity and let him know as much. I told him that I wanted to be present when the officer who was detailed to find these necessary witnesses reported to him. He informed me of the day and hour when his orders were given and I was in his office at nine o'clock the following morning when Lieutenant Smedley reported.

"Chief," he said, "there must have been a leak. I warned all four to keep their mouths shut until I got them before the grand jury, but you know how gabby old Three Fingers is. I think he must have blabbed."

"Why?"


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"Well, when I went to get him this morning in that little bum hotel where he lives, he was dead."

"Dead!"

"Yes, dead in bed, undressed. No signs of violence, but I smelled chloroform. I know what happened. They got in and held his feet and hands and put a chloroform sponge on his nose."

"Um hu-u-um," grunted the chief. "Well, we know whose work that is, don't we?"

"Yep. That's Dopey Joe."

"Sure it's Dopey Joe. But we haven't got a case against him."

"No."

"Just let it go as a suicide. We don't want any noise right now. Did you round up the other three?"

"No. They'd all skipped out. Warned, I guess."

"Damn the luck! I knew this wouldn't work. We've got to do our best, though. Think you can get any other gamblers?"

"Not now. Somebody blabbed, sure as hell."

The telephone rang. Hinkley answered. I heard the basso-profundo voice at the other end of the wire almost as clearly as though the man had been in the room. "Patrolman Finn reporting," it said.

"There's just been a fight down at One-eyed Luke's," it said, "and Dopey Joe got a knife in his liver. He's dead."

"Who did it?"

"That gambler they call Sandy. I've got him. He's

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a hophead. He says Dopey Joe murdered his friend Three Fingers. Know anything about it?"

"Yes," the chief answered. "We know about it. Bring Sandy in." And he hung up the receiver. It had barely dropped into place when the bell rang again.

The state trooper stationed at my home was on the wire. He reported that a person unknown to my servants had driven into the grounds a horse and wagon they had never seen before and delivered what appeared to be a case of ginger ale. The trooper had opened this and found a bomb, which he promptly dropped into a tub of water. He had not been able to reach me at my office and thought, under the circumstances, that he ought to notify the chief of police. I heartily agreed with him and grabbed the telephone to say as much.

After hanging up the receiver I said to Hinkley: "You go and tell Bass that he is playing too rough. Have a little talk with him and slip him the news that he can be put away, too. For your own information I have a man shadowing him right now and the man has his orders, but you needn't tell Bass about that. He probably knows it. If he doesn't, that's his trouble. Just intimate to him that he's playing too rough."

The chief nodded.

"Come along, Smedley," he said. "We're going to call on the judiciary." They linked arms and started at once.

“I’ll wait for you,” I called after them. And in due time I received a detailed report of their call.

Together they went to the little courtroom where Bass presided. It was not in the courthouse, but in a ramshackle building across the street. The courthouse was crowded. Later we built a new one. Bass nodded coldly as they entered, and they did not put themselves to even that much exertion.

“You’re getting too rough, Bass,” the chief said. “Bombs and biting in the clinches are barred. Better cut it out.”

“Think so?”

“Yep.”

“Other people are getting rough, too.”

“Yes?”

“Yes. See that fellow out front?” The chief followed Bass’s eyes and recognized a local gangster familiarly known as Seven-eleven.

“Says he’s a friend of the boss,” Bass continued. “Came in here to tell me he’s going to stick close to me so that if anything happens to Owen Dixon or the boss, he can bump me off quick.”

“Why don’t you lock him up? What’s your constable for?”

“Why don’t you lock him up? You’re chief of police, aren’t you? And I’ve just told you about him.”

“Make a complaint and I will.”

“Aw, bunk! That shows who you’re backing.”

“What if I am?”

“You’ll wish you hadn’t.”

“All right, Bass. We’ll see about that. I just came to give you a friendly warning. Good-by.”

“Take your good-by down the alley.”

When they were again on the sidewalk, Lieutenant Smedley said: “Nice little campaign we’ve got, chief. You’d better let me stick close to you until it’s over. I heard last night that they’re going to take a pot shot at you, and now I believe it.”

“I heard that, too. Stool pigeon told me Benny the Sheik was hired to do the job. I locked Benny up before dawn, and nobody but Benny knows it.”

When they returned to police headquarters with their report of the friendly visit, more news awaited them.

“Lieutenant Vance is in the hospital,” the desk sergeant reported. “Automobile accident. He was patrolling in his Ford when a big car smashed into his rear and threw him out. Broke his left arm, cut his face; nothing serious.” I thought I had heard something important coming over the wire while they were away, but I also thought it better not to ask questions.

“Did they get the fellow who did it?” Hinkley asked.

“Yes—it was Spike Taylor.”

“Um hu-u-um,” grunted Hinkley. “That’s the answer to the raids. Vance was in charge. Well, we

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can't do much to Spike on a reckless-driving charge, but we've got him in jail for a minute, so telephone the boys at the jail to give him the rubber hose. Tell 'em to beat the liver out of him."

"All right, chief." And I heard the order telephoned as follows: "Big drouth. Sprinkle."

As I rose to go, Hinkley said: "Now, don't worry, boss. We'll get your witnesses all right. It's a hard order, of course, but that's what I'm here for is hard orders. I'll get 'em all right. This killing of Three Fingers ought to learn 'em a lesson to keep their traps shut till they get to the grand-jury room."

"All right, Chief," I answered, and on the way back to my office I meditated over the funereal peacefulness of Mike's regime as compared to mine under prohibition and a reform administration.

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## CHAPTER XXXIX

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The following morning I received my first letter from the firm of Handley, Meadows & Farrell. They informed me that the contract for the new city hospital had just been awarded—the first contract involving the bond-issue funds. Our firm would represent the successful contractor, and our fee would be \$22,642.17. I was calculating my share of this sum when the state trooper on guard in my reception room entered my private office unannounced. His excitement and haste infected me so that I dropped my fountain pen.

“There’s a nervous kind of a fellow outside wants to see you,” he reported. “Looks all right—looks like a million dollars—but he’s awful nervous. In a big hurry. Says his name’s Harrison, but nobody out



there knows him. Let me stand between you and him while the steno shows him in. All right?"

I nodded. The name was familiar to me, though he had never been in my office. The only question was whether this was the Harrison I had in mind. The trooper opened the door and signaled the stenographer. She escorted the visitor into the office, and at first sight I recognized him. He was the right Harrison, much to my relief. However, he was obviously in a state of great perturbation.

"I have come to discuss a very important matter," he announced, and then looked nervously over his shoulder to make sure that the stenographer and state trooper had withdrawn.

"Yes?" I said. "Well, sit down and make yourself at home. Have a cigar?"

"No, thank you; and I'd rather stand. First, I must explain to you that Herbert Dixon and I have been friends for more than twenty years—"

"Yes, I know that."

"And his boy, Owen, is engaged to my daughter—"

"Yes, I know that."

"Well, they want to get married—"

"Naturally."

"But what sort of a career is justice of the peace for a fine boy like Owen? I'd like to have him in the First National with me. I'd like to see him launched in business, or, if he wants to practice law, I'd like to help him make the right connections. With all re-

spect to you, sir, there's nothing in this justice-of-the-peace foolishness in my opinion."

"You're absolutely right, Mr. Harrison."

"What! You agree with me?"

"I certainly do, most heartily."

Mr. Harrison fairly dropped into a chair. "Give me a cigar," he said. "Why, I thought you were back of all this tomfoolery of Herb Dixon's."

"No, sir; I am not and never was. I'm against it."

"But aren't you framing—or I mean managing—the boy's campaign?"

"Of course. His father demanded it."

"Well! Now I begin to see!"

"What do you propose, Mr. Harrison?"

"Well, well, well! Now I begin to see. By God, sir, you have sense! I thought from the beginning that you had sense. And you're a gentleman! And I'm not proposing anything. The truth of the matter is I've already done it."

"Done what?"

"Well, Owen and Evelyn are gone."

"Gone?"

"Yes. Married! Eloped! Married and eloped! I'm not supposed to know anything about it, but I did everything except dress them."

"Good!"

"You're with me!"

"Absolutely."

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"By God, that's wonderful! But how am I going to square it with Herb Dixon?"

"I don't see that you've got anything to square. He'll simply have to get over it unaided. Fathers usually do, in time."

"You're right! Yes, sir! I should have thought of that! By God, you're right! Owen is too fine a boy for politics. Stinking business, begging your pardon. What's more, he hates it. Hates it, I tell you. Makes him sick. Nauseates him."

"Where is he now?"

"Traveling. Traveling not less than fifty miles an hour, God willing! Traveling toward New York and I've wired for steamer reservations. Going to France! Honeymoon!"

"Good! Why, Harrison, you never did a better day's work in your life."

"You mean it, don't you? That's wonderful! Can I trust you to convey the news to Herb?"

"You certainly can. Believe me, I regard it as good news."

"Again I thank you. And now good-day. If ever I can serve you, let me know." He turned on one heel and was gone.

I seized the telephone and called Bass. "The war's over," I told him. "Let's have lunch together. I'll come alone and you do the same." I named the main dining-room of our principal hotel as the meeting-

place. That was sufficiently reassuring and he agreed. When we met, he stared at me with his expressionless eyes until I said: "Came to smoke a peace pipe with you." Then he smiled.

"Got enough, eh?" he asked, and his eyes narrowed.

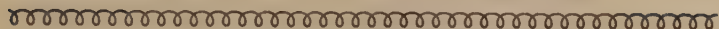
"Yes, friend Bass," I answered. "I know when I'm licked, so I told my candidate to go far, far away from here until after the election. He's on a honeymoon trip to France. Left this morning. You'll want to confirm that, so go and do it. You know where the telephones are." He rose at once. Later I learned that he telephoned some friend employed at the railway station. This was fortunate, because I could have given him only Harrison and Dixon as authorities and he wouldn't have believed them. He returned to the table grinning—an expression that made his face even more sinister than it was in repose.

"If you mean that peace-pipe stuff," he said, "you better send Seven-eleven away from my office right now, because there's a friend of mine going to bump him off in about twenty minutes."

I waited to hear no more, but hurried to the telephone and told the state trooper in my office to go with all haste to Seven-eleven. Bass followed me and listened.

"So you do mean it?" he commented, as I hung up the receiver.

"Yes."



"Well, if I send a fellow in his shirt sleeves—no guns or anything like that—out to your house, will you tell the state trooper there to let him crawl in under the breakfast room for a minute?"

"Why?"

"There's a bomb under there that ought to go off tonight."

"All right, Bass, get your man out there as quick as you can. I don't like bombs."

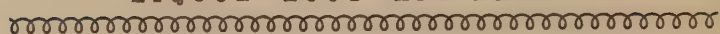
"No more than I like Seven-eleven, I guess." We both laughed; then he telephoned the order and I telephoned to my state trooper.

Immediately after our luncheon I went to police headquarters.

"Hinkley," I said, "we lose this time. My man has eloped with his sweetheart and they're on their way to France."

"Fine!" Hinkley exclaimed. "I want to hear all the cheery details but wait a minute now before you tell me any more because I've got to give some orders. I just found out that Nigger Dan is on the way to bump off your friend Seven-eleven, in front of Bass's office, so I sent a plain-clothes man hotfooting it to slug Nigger Dan."

Hinkley dispatched a motorcycle policeman to intercept the plain-clothes man and countermand the slugging. Then he turned a beaming countenance toward me and asked: "So the war is over, eh?"



"For the present, chief," I answered, "but I still have in mind your idea about a grand clean-up along toward the close of Dixon's administration. We've got too many people around here with nicknames like Spike and Dopey and Greasy. I don't care much for them. In politics they're a nuisance. As a matter of fact, Chief, they don't play politics at all. They just go out and hurt people. I like politics. And so do you. Let's try to keep the grand old game clean and sporting."

"That's the idea," Hinkley agreed, with enthusiasm. "Clean and sporting."

I have smiled many times over the absurdity of this conversation.

CHAPTER XL

I was returned to the legislature by an impressive majority. But before returning to state affairs I wish to mention a few of the changes that time had brought in the general nature of our municipal situation. This is necessary in order to give a clear understanding of the sources of my power as differentiated from those of the machine under Mike Callaghan.

When I took over the reins from Mike, we had on the pay roll of the municipal government only five men designated as inspectors. Ten years later we had one hundred and eighteen. We inspected soft-drink establishments, restaurants, and, for a time, barber shops, to enforce the sanitary laws. We inspected the whole city to enforce fire-prevention laws. We even inspected vacant lots—the purpose of this being to

discover the breeding-places of mosquitoes. In twelve years the revenue of the city government increased nearly five hundred per cent. And not more than three or four of the new activities which made it possible to develop an army of city employees were first suggested in the city hall. Virtually all of them came from well-meaning citizens, many of whom at the same time expressed amazement at the mounting cost of government.

Ten years after Mike Callaghan surrendered his leadership of the machine, we had as its nucleus nearly as many persons on annual salaries as it had been his custom to hire by the day in anticipation of an election. But even our large and steadily increasing horde of employees could furnish nothing more than a nucleus. I was continually afield in search of additional allies who could be welded into a faction.

With the development of our local industries we began to receive large numbers of European immigrants, and these proved to be allies. We gained their allegiance naturally and honestly by befriending them when they most needed it. Our precinct captains did their best to protect the newest arrivals and the more gullible from crooks of their own nationality, who continually preyed upon them. When they were in trouble, we supplied legal advice; when they wanted peddlers' licenses or a permit to build a house, the precinct captain convoyed them to the city hall and quite overawed them by knowing exactly

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what to do and where to go. Not only that; he made them gasp when he called the officials by their first names. Within a very short time there were three wards in our city that returned almost a solid machine vote. To this day they have never wavered in their allegiance. To tell them that there is or ever was anything wrong with our organization would be a waste of time. They know better. They tried it when they had nothing to give but a "thank you," and it never failed them. For thousands of these people it is still the very heart of all that is good in the spirit of America. It gave them the only warm and generous welcome they received.

There is so much to be said on the credit side of our dealing with these people that I must not omit the debit account. It is that we made no effort to induct them into full citizenship. We addressed them as Poles, Italians, Germans, or whatever they happened to be, without once contemplating the incongruity of their voting as American citizens if they were still foreigners. As a matter of fact, they weren't half so foreign in spirit as we thought they were; therefore, to the extent that our attitude had any influence at all, it must have been against Americanization rather than otherwise. Our lesser politicians praised them—as foreigners—with the most shameful flattery. Shameful, I mean, to the politicians, nearly all of whom were native born. I realized, hazily, at times that the performances of our petty candidates were

disgusting, but I didn't know what to do about it. The full import of their ignorant slobbering did not dawn upon me until the sudden flaming of nationalism when the World War broke upon us. We had what we called a German colony, although it proved to be loyal almost to a man. The city councilman who represented it suddenly became afraid that he would be regarded as pro-German, in spite of the fact that he had not a drop of German blood, and deliberately picked a quarrel in a public place with a middle-aged baker who, as a matter of fact, was a German-speaking native of Switzerland. He beat this man outrageously. At the time I could do nothing about it, but when the opportunity came, I banished him, not only from politics, but from the city.

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## CHAPTER XLI

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The greatest mistake I made during my entire career as a political boss was to form an alliance with the group of unethical, grasping lawyers whose profits accrued from use of the sheriff's office. It was never my intention that we should finally number among our staunchest supporters all of the notoriously crooked lawyers in the community, but we finally came to such a pass that the proper place to look for stolen goods or contraband, such as habit-forming drugs, was in the safe of the lawyer known to be allied with the criminal under arrest. Once thoroughly tied up with people of that kind, a political organization can't get rid of them.

I could not foresee that development, however, because I never invited into the machine the small fry

among our crooked criminal lawyers. They came in uninvited after observing the tremendous possibilities of the unfair practices of the damage-suit lawyers. The result, of course, soon became evident in too many acquittals and too many cases dropped because the state's witness had disappeared. In time we developed the vicious type of criminal lawyer who is really the confederate of his client and accessory to the crime. That type still flourishes. I have pointed out this highly dangerous fact many times in talking with lawyers, and invariably their reply is: "But the vast majority of lawyers are honest." That is no answer at all. I readily admit that the percentage of honesty among lawyers is high. It ought to be. Indeed, it has got to be unless we are headed toward anarchy. Lawyers are specially trained men, usually educated at the public expense. They are the high priests of our governmental system. They are not private citizens, either. We seem to forget that they are sworn officers of the court, with extraordinary powers and privileges which impose upon them a professional duty that ranks above their duty to their clients. One dishonest lawyer can do more damage than ten murderous highwaymen. To say that even ninety per cent of our lawyers live up to high ethical standards is not enough. Lawyers must do even better than that. Under our system of government any boy or girl can become a lawyer, and therefore it is only reasonable to assume that some of those who



receive their licenses lack the requisite character to discharge their responsibilities. We ought to face that fact frankly and get rid of the chaff.

What this country needs is a house-cleaning conducted by the lawyers themselves, to raise the standards of their profession. And along with that we need some kind of an arrangement to limit the number of lawyers. We cannot afford to crowd such a vitally important profession. These men have such power that they can go out and make business if there is not enough to go round. No single group of men in this country has the power to wreck our government except the lawyers. I wish to set down the opinion solemnly and without qualification that they are wrecking it now and have been for a long time. The task is enormous, however, and there is still plenty of time for them to undertake a mighty reform.

When my friends among the corporation lawyers began to complain to me of the enormous losses their companies were suffering in our courthouse, I agreed with them that we ought to strike a blow for reform. I couldn't go to the root of the matter at once and lay down the law to the sheriff, because it was necessary first to prepare public opinion; so I suggested that they pick out the worst offender among the many of whom they complained and make an example of him. Just as soon as they had done this in a sensational manner, I promised, I would announce publicly that abuses of that type must stop. This agreement was

reached in a conference with Stanley Parson, general attorney for the Q. & O. Railway Company, who had come from his office in Chicago to lay the matter before me. He told me that an investigation was then under way, under his direction, into a damage suit brought by a lawyer known all over the state as Battling Billy. He was a picturesque character, absolutely without conscience; and because he was so widely known, I applauded Parson's selection of him for the preparatory exposé.

A few weeks later he again came to the city, and summoned me to meet him in the office of the local attorneys for the Q. & O. These two men, Howard Bagley and Walter Dean, I had long known and respected.

"Well," Parsons said, "we have finally got Battling Billy right where we want him. By tomorrow night we ought to have a neat little bow-knot tied in his tail. Bagley and Dean and I will then take turn about standing on the courthouse steps swinging him around our heads."

"I'll be damned if I do," Dean remarked. "I think he'd still wriggle around and bite." Incidentally I should explain at this point that while the subject of these remarks was popularly known as Battling Billy, the lawyers all called him "the Eel."

"Tomorrow we are going to try the damage suit I told you about," Parsons explained, "and just as soon as the trial is over, we will be ready to institute dis-

barment proceedings against Battling Billy and file criminal charges against Dr. Fleet, the trained, hand-picked physician who always testifies in his cases. Since you are to follow up this exposure with appropriate comment and action, I think it would be better for you to sit through the trial and hear all of the evidence."

"Yes," I said. "I think so, too." Parsons was delighted.

Next morning at five minutes to ten o'clock I met Bagley and Dean in the corridor just outside the courtroom. Parsons came in a minute later. He was excited.

"Everything ready?" he asked. Bagley nodded. "Are the detectives here?" Dean nodded. "Is the photographer here?" They both nodded. "Have you got the photographs?" Again they both nodded. "Let me see them." Dean opened his brief-case and produced twelve photographs, each about twelve by twelve inches. While examining them Parsons chuckled. "If these don't hang the Eel," he finally said, returning them to Dean, "nothing will."

"We've got him all right," Bagley agreed, and then we entered the courtroom.

"Right on the dot," said Mr. Parsons, consulting his watch as Dean and Bagley placed their brief-cases on the large table provided for the attorneys. Then they sat down, Bagley in front, where he would face the witnesses, Dean close behind him, so that he

could whisper advice, Parsons four or five feet behind Dean. I sat with the spectators. As Judge Davis mounted the bench, the three attorneys rose and bowed, and a few seconds later Battling Billy, counsel for the plaintiff, hurried forward through the center aisle to his seat on the opposite side of the table from Mr. Bagley. There was a stir among the hundred spectators when he appeared, a sort of buzzing, as though many persons were pointing him out and telling who he was. It was an accepted popular tradition that he had not lost a case during seven years, and while the tradition was not true, it indicates more clearly than actual facts the theatrical personality of the man. Even when opening his brief-case he seemed to hold the center of the stage; the crowd watched him as though this were a very strategic move that instantly gained him a point. Then he swept his fingers through his flowing mane of black hair, parted far over to one side, and that gesture seemed to win another point. Even the prospective jurors, waiting to be sworn in, looked at him expectantly. At first glance the Eel appeared to be a strikingly handsome man, and probably most observers never revised their first impression. He was one of the type that narrowly misses classic beauty, the blemish being not so much a matter of dimensions or coloring as of expression. There were animal qualities in that face, a certain low coarseness. During a cross-examination his eyes were those of the fox. And at no time was there

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evidence of humor or spirituality. Nevertheless his abundant physical health and flaming instinct for combat so charmed a crowd that men stifled sober judgment in order to cheer. If Battling Billy were not a real hero, they would make him one anyway. He was a fighter.

"Number four thousand eight hundred and twenty-two," the clerk of the court announced; "Miss Edith Lake, plaintiff, versus the Q. & O. Railway Company, defendant."

"What says the plaintiff?" asked His Honor.

"Ready," the Eel replied, in a stern martial tone.

"What says the defendant?"

"Ready."

"Mr. Clerk, swear the jury."

While this ceremony was in progress, two deputy sheriffs carried Miss Edith Lake, reclining in her invalid's chair, through the center aisle and set her down close to her lawyer. She was dressed in white from shoes to a small bit of lace that served for a hat. The chair she occupied was very much like a steamer deck chair. Her face was pale, her large blue eyes told their own story of long confinement, and her attire, although it was all white, somehow suggested that of a nun. In good health, thought the onlookers, she would be a lively, buxom, attractive young woman. The Eel looked at her, but their eyes did not meet and no greetings were exchanged. His expression seemed to say: "The hour of vengeance has struck."

Soon after the jury was impaneled, he began the introduction of testimony. Under skilled guidance the story of his client's misfortune unfolded as rapidly and easily as though he were composing it instead of working with living witnesses. There were two high lights in the testimony. Miss Lake herself furnished the first, and her physician the second. She had been a passenger on an excursion train that was wrecked, she said. When the train jumped the track, she was thrown out of her seat and across the aisle, then back again, then to the floor. Several passengers picked her up, but she could not stand. Eventually she was taken to the hospital along with other injured passengers, and the railroad company's doctor examined her. He said there was nothing serious the matter except that her back was painfully bruised; that she would be all right in a few days and might go home at once if she wished. After five days in bed at home her mother had summoned Dr. Fleet. He reported serious injury to her spine; since then she had been under his care.

Dr. Fleet was the next witness. After minute description of the nature of the injury, there was a moment of pause; then the Eel asked, slowly, with dramatic spacing of the words:

"Doctor, in your opinion, will this young lady ever walk again?"

"No, sir," was the emphatic reply. "The injury is permanent."


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"That's all, doctor." And then to the judge: "Your Honor, the plaintiff rests."

"Call your first witness," said the judge, addressing Mr. Bagley. He called the railroad company's physician, Dr. Wolff, who took the stand, polished his spectacles, and looked a trifle bored, as indeed he was, courtrooms being familiar scenery.

"Doctor," said Mr. Bagley, "have you had much experience with accident cases?"

"Yes, sir."

"How many years have you been physician for the Q. & O.?"

"Eighteen."

"About how many accident cases have you treated?"

"I don't know exactly; several thousand."

"All right, doctor. I believe you examined Miss Edith Lake, the plaintiff in this case. Please tell the jury what injury, if any, you found."

"There was a large bruise on her back, to the right of the spine, over the short ribs. She was suffering from shock. There was no evidence of internal injury, and positively no injury whatever to the spine. That, of course, was what I looked for."

"Did you examine her again later at her home?"

"Yes, sir."

"And what did you find then?"

"The bruise had disappeared and she was enjoying perfect health. I think she still is."

“You think she could get up from that chair right now and dance; is that right, doctor?”

“I haven’t the slightest doubt that she could.”

“That’s all, doctor.”

“No questions,” said the Eel, and his tone was eloquent. In effect it said: “What would be the good of questioning that scoundrel? He’s hired to speak his little piece and stick to it.”

The next witness, a well-dressed young man of athletic appearance, took the stand. Miss Edith Lake gave him one startled glance, then closed her eyes and held her handkerchief in a tight fist.

“What is your name?” asked Mr. Bagley.

“Thomas B. Hope.”

“By whom are you employed and in what capacity?”

“I am a special officer for the Q. & O. Railway Company.”

“Have you ever met Miss Edith Lake, the plaintiff in this case?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Tell the jury when and how you met her?”

“I was assigned to investigate her case about two weeks after the wreck in which she was injured. Leslie Stribling and I rented the front room of the house across the street from her home—”

“Who is Leslie Stribling?”

“He is also a special officer for the Q. & O. Railway Company.”

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"All right, Mr. Hope, go on."

"We first became acquainted with Miss Alice Lake, Edith's sister."

"How?"

"Well, we just flirted with her."

"All right, go on."

"She introduced us to Edith, and after a couple of weeks, during which we visited them five times, we proposed going on a picnic some Sunday. Alice said that was impossible because Edith couldn't walk, but we told her that we had seen Edith walking."

"Had you seen Edith walking?"

"Yes, sir."

"How many times?"

"Two or three."

"Did anyone support her or help her?"

"No, sir."

"Did she fall down?"

"No, sir. Once we saw her kick a pillow across the room."

"Well, after you told Alice that you had seen Edith walking, what, if anything, did she do or say?"

"At first she was very much embarrassed; then she went and talked to Edith for ten or fifteen minutes. After a while she called us into Edith's room—Edith was in bed—and they said that if we could pick out some place where no one would be likely to see us and go fairly early in the morning, it would be all right. They explained about this damage suit, and

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that Edith's injury was supposed to be permanent. She showed us braces that she was supposed to be wearing, and laughed."

"You and Stribling and the girls were fairly good friends by that time, were you not?"

"Yes, sir. We'd been over to see them quite often."

"All right, Mr. Hope, did you go on the picnic?"

"Yes, sir."

"Tell us about it."

"We went in Stribling's car, about seven o'clock the following Sunday morning, to a little spring back in the hills about fourteen miles. There's a little lake there about the size of a city block, and a nice beach of white sand. We went in swimming—"

"Did Edith go in swimming?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did she swim?"

"Yes, sir."

"About how long?"

"Six minutes. I timed her."

"And then what did you do?"

"We played leapfrog to get warm."

"Did Edith play?"

"Yes, sir."

"Tell the jury just what you mean by leapfrog."

"Well, one person bends over and braces himself by putting his hands on his knees. Then the other person approaches running, places his hands on the

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back of the person bending over, and leaps over him. That's the way we played it."

"Did Edith jump over anyone?"

"Yes, sir; she jumped over all of us, several times."

"And did the rest of you jump over her?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, what did you do next?"

"We ran several foot races and then we climbed up the face of one of the hills where it was steep and rocky. Then we climbed down again. Just as we got down, Alice bruised her foot on a rock; so Stribling put her up on his shoulders to carry her back to the car. Edith wanted to be carried, too, so she straddled my shoulders and I carried her. The girls drew the curtains of the car and changed from their bathing-suits to their clothes and then we cooked breakfast over a camp fire and then we came home."

"Were any photographs of the picnic party made?"

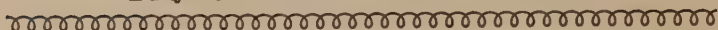
"Yes, sir. I had stationed a photographer in a tree. He made twelve pictures."

"Are these the pictures?" Mr. Bagley offered them, and the witness examined each carefully. Then he said: "Yes, sir."

"Is the photographer who made these within reach?"

"Yes, sir. He's outside in the corridor, waiting to be called."

"Is Mr. Stribling available?"



"Yes, sir. He's outside, too."

"That's all, Mr. Hope." And then to the Eel: "You may take the witness."

The Eel was calmly arranging a pile of papers.

"Mr. Hope," he began, "as the special officer assigned to this case, were you given all available information concerning it before you undertook your investigation?"

"Yes, sir."

"Were you familiar with the opinion of Dr. Fleet as to the seriousness of Miss Lake's injury?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then when you launched out on that very enjoyable picnic, you knew that you were taking a chance that it might result in sudden and horrible death for this young woman?"

"I didn't believe that any such risk existed."

"In spite of the fact that Dr. Fleet had given his opinion?"

"Yes, sir, in spite of that fact."

"You don't think very highly of Dr. Fleet, then?"

"No, sir. I think he's a crook."

"You probably have the same opinion of me. Have you, Mr. Hope?"

"Yes, sir."

"And you were willing on behalf of your employers to back your opinion at the risk of her life?"

"I was backing the opinion of Dr. Wolff, not mine."

“But why do you have so little regard for Dr. Fleet in this controversy between the two men of science?”

“Because Dr. Fleet is your hired hand.”

“Have you positive evidence of that fact, Mr. Hope?”

“Well, he always appears when you are the attorney in a personal-injury suit.”

“And you think that very likely I influence his testimony; is that correct, Mr. Hope?”

“Yes, sir.”

“You think that I do this by paying him money; is that correct?”

“Yes, sir.”

“And are you positive that the Q. & O. Railway Company doesn't pay Dr. Wolff?”

“Of course they pay him. He's their regular physician.”

“But you don't think that that would influence his testimony?”

“No, sir. I know it doesn't.”

“Are you, by any chance, a physician, Mr. Hope?”

“No, sir.”

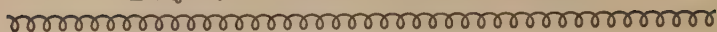
“You have heard that doctors sometimes disagree?”

“Yes, sir.”

“But you feel perfectly competent to pass upon such disagreements?”

“No, sir, I do not.”

“But didn't you pass upon this one?”



"If I did, I guessed right."

"Well, Mr. Hope, you knew what Dr. Fleet said about the case, and all I want to bring out is that if he had been absolutely right, you endangered this girl's life. Now, if he had been right, didn't you endanger her life?"

"If he had been right, maybe I did."

"Exactly, Mr. Hope. But it was your duty to your employers to take that chance. Is that correct?"

"We didn't consider it taking a chance."

"Precisely, Mr. Hope. That's all we wanted to know. The jury is interested in how these little matters are handled. Now, Mr. Hope, I want you to tell us whether Alice is very much larger or smaller than Edith."

"They are just about the same size."

"Is Alice blonde or brunette?"

"Her complexion is just about the same as Edith's."

"When they stand close together do they look like sisters?"

"Yes, sir."

"Now, Mr. Hope, I want to take up another matter. Are there any trees in the front yard of the Lake homestead?"

"Yes, sir."

"Are there any trees in the front yard of the house where you and Stribling rented a room?"

"Yes, sir."

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"How far apart would you say the two houses are?"

"About one hundred feet."

"At that distance, under the shade of trees, looking from one house to the other, was it easy to tell whether Alice or Edith kicked a pillow across the room?"

"Yes, sir. Very easy. We knew both of them well."

"All right, Mr. Hope, I just wanted to know. And now another matter: You spoke of seeing Edith kick a pillow across a room. Was the pillow on the floor?"

"Yes, sir."

"It isn't clear to me how you could see through the walls of the house. Will you explain that?"

"Yes, sir. Alice threw the pillow at Edith and it landed about at her feet. I could tell by the movement of Edith's shoulders that she kicked the pillow back."

"And could you see the course of the pillow all the way?"

"No, sir. Only as it crossed the open door. I saw Alice raise the pillow and throw it. Then I saw Edith move in a way that showed she was kicking it."

"Then part of this was a matter of deduction?"

"Yes, sir."

"In order to see the pillow continuously you would have had to see through the walls of the house; is that correct?"

"Yes, sir. But what happened was clear enough."

"I'm sure of that, Mr. Hope, but all of us aren't detectives. We just wanted to know. And now I want

to take up another matter. How old is Mr. Stribling?"

"Twenty-eight."

"How old are you?"

"Twenty-nine."

"Would you describe Mr. Stribling as an ugly man or good-looking?"

"He's good-looking."

"Have you ever heard yourself referred to as ugly?"

"No, sir."

"Well, Mr. Hope, I would be inclined to agree that you are a very good-looking young man. You two, of course, told Alice and Edith that you liked them?"

"Yes, sir."

"Didn't you tell them that you loved them?"

"No, sir."

"But you visited them very often?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you judge that they liked you or not?"

"We seemed to get on all right."

"You, of course, told them that you were railroad detectives?"

"No, sir."

"What did you tell them about your employment?"

"We said that we were accountants."

"And they believed you?"

"Yes, sir."

"And their mother and father accepted you as visitors?"

"Yes, sir."

"The fact that you were there under false pretenses, accepting the hospitality of their home, didn't embarrass you?"

"No, sir."

"On the contrary, all of you became very good friends?"

"Yes, sir."

"Rather intimate friends, I judge. Is that correct?"

"Yes, sir."

"When you discussed the picnic, wasn't it your opinion that they reposed considerable confidence in you two young men?"

"Yes, sir."

"Precisely, Mr. Hope. Are you married?"

"Yes, sir."

"Is Stribling married?"

"Yes, sir."

"Both of you told the girls that you were married?"

"No, sir."

"Why didn't you?"

"We were there to make friends with them and get information."

"And you did make friends with them?"

"Yes, sir."

"Leaving them to assume that you were single men attracted by their womanly charms?"

“Yes, sir.”

“Did it occur to you that they might fall in love with you?”

“I didn’t think about it.”

“All right, Mr. Hope, I see that your mind was on business. But let me ask you one more question. Did you ever know of any girl exaggerating her physical disabilities in the presence of a young man who was paying her marked attention?”

“I have never thought about the matter.”

“And you didn’t think about it in this case either?”

“No, sir.”

“Now let’s get to the picnic. It occurred to me, Mr. Hope, that the little party was extremely active. Did anyone, by chance, bring along a drink or two?”

“Yes, sir. I brought a pint flask of cocktails.”

“Did Edith have a drink?”

“Yes, sir. Three drinks.”

“When did she have the first one?”

“Just before we went in swimming.”

“And when the party was over, she had to be carried back to the automobile; is that correct?”

“No, sir.”

“Didn’t I hear you say that she asked to be carried?”

“Yes, sir, but—”

“Never mind the rest of it, Mr. Hope. You have answered the question. She asked you to carry her back to the automobile, didn’t she?”



"Yes, sir."

"Where did you get the cocktails, Mr. Hope?"

"From a bootlegger."

"That is all, Mr. Hope, but don't leave the corridor, because I am going to swear out a warrant against you for a violation of the law and I want you at hand so the sheriff can serve it. You are excused now, and thank you for your testimony. That's all."

"Just a minute," said Bagley, addressing the witness. "Mr. Hope, did the photographer have any drinks?"

"No, sir."

"You didn't pour any cocktails over the lenses of his camera, did you?"

"No, sir."

"That's all."

Mr. Hope started to rise, but was again requested to tarry, this time by the Eel.

"With reference to intoxicants, Mr. Hope," he began, "have you ever heard the remark that they'd make a jack rabbit attack a bulldog?"

"Yes, sir."

"That's all."

"But have you ever seen a jack rabbit attack a bulldog?" Mr. Bagley hastened to ask.

"No, sir."

"Have you ever heard that three cocktails would overcome paralysis of the legs resulting from injury to the spine?"



"Tut, tut, gentlemen," said Judge Davis, smiling. "This witness has not qualified as an expert. You are excused, Mr. Hope."

As the detective left the stand, Bagley and Dean were conferring in whispers. This was the first time they had heard of the flask of cocktails.

Presently Parsons and Dean rose and walked out into the corridor. I judged that they might wish to speak to me, so I also went out.

"I'm afraid," Parsons said to me, much crestfallen, "that this case will not serve as the basis for disbarment proceedings. We ought to come into court with clean hands for such an occasion. Still, I think we'll win the case; at least some good will be done."

"You think we'll win the case?" Dean queried. Parsons stared at him alarmed. "We'll be damned lucky to get out of here alive," Dean remarked, and returned to the courtroom. On his advice Bagley at once announced that the defense rested. Parsons sat with me on returning to the courtroom.

"Aren't you going to call Stribling?" the Eel demanded of Bagley.

"No."

"Then I will call him." And he did so, with the result that the jury was treated to another twenty minutes of the same sort of cross-examination to which Thomas B. Hope had been subjected.

"I don't see that that gets him anywhere," Parsons

whispered to me. "I still believe that the essential testimony stands unshaken."

"He hasn't finished yet," I said. "If he doesn't recall Dr. Fleet, then I miss my guess."

The words were scarcely uttered when Stribling was dismissed and the Eel went out into the corridor, returning two minutes later with Dr. Fleet, who again took the witness stand.

"Doctor," said the Eel, "I want you to tell the jury just when you reached the conclusion that Miss Edith Lake's injury was permanent."

"Now it's coming," I whispered. "This is what I expected."

"About four weeks after the accident," replied Dr. Fleet. "Up to that time I had entertained some hope. Then there was a sudden turn for the worse, and it became apparent that the injury was permanent."

"That's all, doctor." And then to the court: "The plaintiff rests."

"Very well, gentlemen," said Judge Davis. "It is now after one o'clock. We will recess for luncheon and then proceed with the argument."

At the luncheon table Dean said: "Bagley, you are thin-skinned and what the Eel is going to do to you this afternoon will make you half sick for a week. We've got other cases to try and I want you to save yourself. You and Parsons get out of this and let me finish it. Go and take care of Tom Hope. They've probably got him locked up by this time."

Bagley and Parsons exchanged glances; then the latter said: "I don't agree with you, Dean, but I've never known you to be wrong, so I'm going to act on your advice."

After the luncheon recess Dean sat alone on his side of the attorney's table. Parsons and Bagley did not return to the courthouse, but I did. I wanted to see it through.

As counsel for the plaintiff, the Eel opened and closed the argument. His first address was brief and in good temper. He merely stated that the plaintiff's case in his opinion was complete and that he felt confident that the jury would award damages. He was saving most of his time for a closing address that, of course, couldn't be answered.

Dean was allowed one hour. He used only a few minutes.

"Your Honor, and Gentlemen of the Jury," he said, "this has been a very difficult case for counsel for the defense. We are confronted, as you are also, by two conflicting opinions of experienced physicians. Not being experts, we assigned two trusted and trustworthy observers to assist us in arriving at a conclusion. They made their observations and reported. As you probably know, railway companies very often settle claims out of court. We had no objection to settling this one out of court. But the reports we received indicated fraud on the part of the plaintiff, and so we elected to go to trial. It was a surprise to

us to learn that our investigators had employed intoxicants. We apologize to this honorable court and jury. But if all testimony about the activities of the plaintiff subsequent to imbibing a cocktail is eliminated, the record still shows that Miss Edith Lake was able to stand alone, to walk, to discard her braces, and to kick a pillow after Dr. Fleet had reported her a hopeless cripple. As for the cocktails, I doubt that a pint flask divided between four persons would produce intoxication in any of them. In all probability, if we had known of the cocktails, we should have proceeded with the trial anyway. Surely so small a quantity of alcohol would not overcome paralysis of the lower limbs resulting from an incurable injury to the spine. We humbly admit that Mr. Hope went too far. What he did was not necessary, and we are sorry. It is for you to judge whether his mistake robs his testimony of all value. You appear to me to be men of sound sense and I repose confidence in your judgment. I have no desire to pose before you as an orator and, with these brief—I might almost say ‘unnecessary’—remarks, I leave the case in your hands.”

The Eel had saved fifty minutes for his closing argument. During the last five of these even the imperturbable Dean occasionally opened his eyes and, against his will, registered admiration.

“Not content with maiming her body beyond repair,” said the Battler, “this soulless corporation

through the slimy agency of false Hope and stinking Stribling must invade even the sacred precincts of the hearthstone. It was not enough to break her back; they must also break her heart. It was not enough to ruin her health; they must also wreck her morals and drag her down to a drunkard's grave. Observers, says Mr. Dean, God have mercy on his soul; but were they observers? It sounded to me more like seducers. What care they for young womanhood when the almighty dollar is at stake? Risk her life, play fast and loose with her innocent young affections; if she dies, the suit dies with her; so what have they to lose? Take a chance. First incompetence in the operation of their trains, then lies, then booze, anything, anything, to save the sacred dollars. Never in all my experience as a lawyer have I encountered such flagrant corruption of everything that decent men hold sacred. For justice, for pure young womanhood, for hearth and home, I appeal to you as twelve good men and true to administer such a rebuke to this monster, this snake, this unspeakable scoundrel, that never again will it dare to send its foul Hopes and Striblings sneaking and smiling their way into the trusting hearts of honest men and women. More is at stake in this case than mere recompense for a blighted life. Brave men have shouldered arms and bared their breasts to alien bullets in a lesser cause. I cannot say more. Tears flood my eyes, and my voice chokes. This is no ordinary case. With a heart too full for utter-



ance, I leave it in your hands, confident that as God-fearing men, sensible of your duty as patriotic American citizens, you will render a verdict that will thunder down the corridors of time as a rebuke and a warning to every scoundrel who dares to conspire for filthy profit against the innocence and purity of home and womanhood."

The jury was out one hour. They awarded Miss Lake damages in the sum of fifty thousand dollars.

"Good Lord!" Parsons groaned when Dean and I brought him the news. "And I thought we were going to ruin that scoundrel. By God, Dean, we'll get him yet! We'll get him if it takes twenty years!"

"Twenty years is about right," Dean drawled, smiling and filling his pipe. "That's about what it will take. He may lose his cunning as old age overtakes him. Ye—es, twenty years—by that time we ought to have a fair chance."

The outcome of this case was a severe disappointment to me—and more so because no other case even approximately equal to it was ever developed as a basis for disbarment proceedings. They tried time after time and invariably failed miserably. But I still insist that the job could have been done and ought to have been done. The trouble is that lawyers have such a deep dislike for disbarment proceedings that they let it confuse them even after they have undertaken to prepare such a case.

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## CHAPTER XLII

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My attendance at the next session of the legislature was cut short by one of those strange and sensational upheavals that from time to time push all ordinary problems aside for a season of pandemic hysteria. This one related to "the white slave traffic." I had read more or less on this subject in newspapers and magazines for many months, but it seemed always to be remote. I gathered the impression that the existence of a white slave traffic had been discovered in Chicago. Next it was in New York. Presently it was quite general. I must have overlooked some of the more sensational exposés, because I was still uninformed as to the details of how the alleged white slavers were supposed to operate, long after millions of shopgirls and even schoolgirls were fully informed

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on the subject and in a state of terror. A scene I witnessed on the train going to the capital gave me my first clear understanding of the extent of public opinion, or rather panic.

There was an attractive girl, about seventeen years of age, on the train. She was probably returning to a private school; at any rate she was traveling alone. Seated between her and me was a commercial traveler. I identified him by the appearance of his baggage, the large assortment of railway time-tables he consulted, and other indications. He smiled at the girl several times and finally sat down beside her. She had not repulsed his first advances, but now she seemed to be alarmed. I was watching their little intermezzo with amused, casual interest when he jumped to his feet, swore, and grabbed his left arm in a way that indicated he had been hurt. At the same time the girl rose from her seat and declaimed dramatically: "Arrest that man!" Naturally, all of the men in the car intervened at once.

It developed that the commercial traveler had asked her to go with him to the dining-car. But while extending this invitation he had drawn from his vest pocket a little gold pencil attached to a gold chain and twirled it around his index finger. Gold pencils were not in common use then. The girl knew instantly what this meant. This was a hypodermic needle! He was going to puncture her skin, as though by accident, inject a drug that would put her to sleep,

and run off with her. He was a white slaver! She had read all about them and determined long ago what to do in such an emergency. Her plan of campaign, I must say, was excellent. She had jabbed a hatpin two inches into his arm before he could jab the hypodermic into her and then she had shouted for help. I demanded sternly that the man identify himself—and just in the nick of time, for the crowd was ready to pounce upon him. Beyond question he would have been severely beaten, if not killed. He had no difficulty whatever in showing who he was and proving that no hypodermic needle existed; but still the temper of the crowd was such that I advised him to leave the train at the next station, which he did.

Melodramatic events of this kind were taking place all over the country. Especially around railway stations it actually became dangerous to offer any sort of assistance to a woman traveling alone, although the courtesy of American men to women travelers has been a matter of national pride since the days of the stagecoach.

About the time I completed my part of the work on the new appropriation bill, a long petition came to me from the largest and most influential woman's club at home, demanding that I take action to suppress the white slave traffic. They wanted legislation to meet this newly discovered danger. There was no need for additional legislation; we had plenty to meet that kind of an emergency; the question in my mind was

whether or not the emergency existed. And, frankly, I didn't know. I made up my mind to find out, however, just as soon as my duties in the capital would allow. While I was trying to frame an adequate letter that would postpone matters for a few weeks without making these excited women suspect me of being a white slaver myself, or in league with white slavers, I read in the newspapers that women's organizations in nearly every city in the state were appointing committees to do their own investigating. In view of the situation in our city, this would never do. No matter what they discovered on the subject of white slave traffic, they might learn entirely too many other facts, all of which would make trouble for me—and unjustly, I felt.

There was nothing to do but wade into this jungle and meet whatever dragons it concealed. I went home at once and on arriving gave out a ringing statement. If the white slave traffic existed in our community, it would be put down by ruthless force at once! Whatever legislation proved necessary to aid the campaign I would sponsor. No stone would be left unturned. Grand old phrase! Always good. Every arm of the government would be enlisted. I took in somewhat more territory than I controlled in making that grandiose declaration, but I was not in error, for the national government also took notice of this hysteria, and the Mann Act resulted. It is still on the statute books to the delight and profit of blackmailers.

Having thus made my position satisfactorily clear, I went to see Mike Callaghan and find out what all this noise amounted to. I found him in his suburban home, reading a magazine article on the very subject in question.

"Is there really a white slave traffic?" I asked.

"Damned if I know. I never heard of one before. Not around here, anyway. I've been told that white girls are sometimes shipped out of European seaports to the Orient, but I always thought they were recruited in the red-light districts of those ports. I never heard before of any white slave traffic in this country, but these fellows are certainly printing a lot of stuff." He tapped the magazine with his finger by way of identifying "these fellows."

"You think there may be something in it, then?" I asked.

"Hell! I don't know. If you'd asked me two years ago, I'd have said rot. But after all the stuff that's being printed, if it were any of my trouble, I'd go and find out."

"I'm going to do that," I said. "Suppose you tell me, just by way of giving me a start, which statements in the printed exposures you've read are the most challenging. Some of them evidently were new to you. Some of them must have seemed probable, because you are in doubt. Tell me a few that were the most challenging. They'll make good points of beginning. And I know almost nothing about this matter.

It will be hard for me to investigate, but I am determined to do it in person."

Callaghan nodded vigorous approval of my decision, then puckered his brow, scratched his head, and leaned forward to speak confidentially.

“What gets me,” he said in a low tone, “is the statement that these girls come and go like leaves in the wind. By jingoes, that’s true! And I never thought of it before! You round ’em up in August and list ’em, and, so help me God, by November the list isn’t worth a damn. Half the names are no good. Gone! And new ones! Always new ones! Where the devil do they come from and where the devil do they go? That’s what I never thought about before. I wonder if they die! That’s what these fellows are saying. If it’s true, it’s awful—white slave traffic or no white slave traffic. Now, if I were in your place, I’d start work on that question, because it’s the key to all of them.”

I nodded agreement and we talked far into the night. Next day I began my investigation.

Mike had warned me that these women delighted in romancing about themselves. As he explained it, they were very often asked by their clients to tell their stories and felt obliged to furnish something that would arouse beery sympathy in order to please. Nearly all of them, he said, had evolved stories that they had told so often they almost believed them. That any importance could attach to the truth about themselves would be beyond their understanding, he

thought. I judged from his certainty on this point that he had heard quite a number of their yarns; also that their improbability or absurdity or both would be sufficient for me to detect their lack of truth. But how to keep from wasting time in hearing more of this moonshine—that was the problem.

My first thought was that I might get some information from peace officers who knew them; from peddlers who sold them goods; from the employees of mercantile firms who sold and delivered goods to them; and from hack-drivers and chauffeurs who delivered their clients. I tried all of these prospective sources of information and was amazed to find how little they knew. Indeed, they knew almost nothing—either important or unimportant. They had read of the white slave traffic—at least, a few of them had—and they were inclined to credit its existence simply because it was a current report. None had made independent inquiries, nor had they even stumbled upon any facts that might bear upon the question I had set out to answer. All of my preliminary scouting came to nothing and I was again face to face with the necessity of going to the women themselves. Of course I had intended to do that finally, but I had hoped to have a few facts to guide me before beginning. Warned that a witness is likely to indulge his imagination, one prefers to be prepared to cross-examine as well as ask direct questions.

Fortunately I hit upon the plan of seeking out the

more intelligent among them and then asking these women, not about themselves, but about the others of their acquaintance. This procedure brought such excellent results that I was soon able to undertake interviews solely for the purpose of testing the accuracy of what I had already heard.

To my utter amazement, I learned that the vast majority of these women, according to their own testimony, had had sexual experience between the ages of six and twelve. By the time they had reached the age of puberty, it had become simply a casual habit. Commercializing the habit was for most of them fairly easy. I found only a few women who alleged that they had renounced modesty at the age of eighteen or above and entered prostitution because of dire want. In every case of this kind there was a baby, and I found that nearly all of these babies were legitimate. The mothers were deserted wives. From this fact I judged that their claims of modesty in early youth were credible. Only a few of the women mentioned seduction. Of the thirty-six women proprietors of bawdy-houses whom I interviewed, twenty-nine were mothers. Twenty-two told me that their first-born babies were legitimate, and that they had become prostitutes in order to provide for their babies after first attempting to do so by working and discovering that they couldn't. None had been trained for skilled work. They went into prostitution unwillingly, but with their eyes open and with the de-

termination to make money—always for the baby. Few of them had saved money, but they had made it.

I was keenly interested in this commentary upon the energizing effect of motherhood upon women even in this outlawed and pariah realm. The women without babies seemed to be rudderless drifters, although one would ordinarily suppose that a young single woman would have a much better chance either to escape from prostitution or to save money and become a proprietor than one burdened with a baby. A great many of the childless women frankly stated that they scarcely remembered virginity. They seemed to have been promiscuous from the beginning, which, I should judge, would be quite natural for children, once they started.

Oddly enough, some of them had developed, after puberty, a yearning for monogamy, which they indulged as best they could. With a few exceptions, each seemed to have a preference for some one man, and sometimes a strong romantic attachment for him. Some of them received gifts from their lovers, and others supported their lovers. It was very interesting to me that women who gave themselves day after day and night after night to whatever number of men they could serve should retain such a strong sense of discrimination that they would be willing to support a man.

Most of these romances were of short duration, but some lasted for years. Occasionally a woman com-

mitted suicide because her lover deserted her, and very frequently the women quarreled bitterly or even fought among themselves because of jealousy. They did not consider that their own way of life constituted unfaithfulness to a lover at all. They were not unfaithful to one, as they understood such matters, until they chose another lover. The men were not considered unfaithful if they paid another woman, but if they accepted her favors for nothing, they were.

These disclosures had me pop-eyed with amazement and curiosity, so that I couldn't refrain from asking more and more questions on points of no great importance. I did, however, turn back to the two primary questions: Where did these women come from? And where did they go? I had found out very quickly and easily where they came from. And with equal ease and celerity I learned what became of them when they disappeared. About one-third of them got married and more than one-third of them went to live with men without benefit of clergy. As a rule they married in haste. I gathered the impression that these marriages were far from outstanding successes. One young woman, about twenty-two years of age, had been married eight times. Anyway, she thought it was about eight times. She couldn't remember the names of all of her husbands. I judged that if there was any error in her calculation, the total was more than eight. Beyond question, seven of these marriages were bigamous. She had never heard

that a woman could commit bigamy; her impression was that the only person who could possibly be injured by bigamy was a deserted woman whose marriage certificate proved to be null and void. She explained—evidently in defense of her spouses—that she had deserted all of them. The suggestion that she could be imprisoned for at least a half dozen of her matrimonial ventures struck her as too ridiculous to be worthy of consideration. There were plenty of women in the world; the men could find others. I saw no good reason for trying to convince her that she was a criminal. My object was to find out whether these continually disappearing women were murdered, died of disease, committed suicide, or suffered other tragic ends while still in their teens or twenties. The evidence I gathered was as overwhelming as it was amazing. Not that there were no cases of tragic death! Far from it! But the proportions between marriage and death from disease were astounding.

I found a high percentage of subnormal mentality among these women, but it was of a type I had never before encountered. Nearly all of them seemed bright enough at first, but they usually gave themselves away very quickly by their silly giggling or laughing—often about nothing. Most of the subnormal people I have encountered were morose and quite likely to have their feelings hurt about nothing. That reaction seems to me entirely understandable in a person whose mind is hazy and slow. I am sure that if I were

in a group and all of them laughed except me, and I hadn't caught the joke, I should be unhappy. That is a frequent experience of dull-witted people, and I am not at all astounded that they lapse into melancholia. But these women were quite the opposite. They were happily silly and impressively good-natured. The word "moron" had not at that time become common property; so far as I know, it did not even exist. Consequently, when I read, years later, scientific definitions of the moron mind, I felt sure that I had encountered quite a large number of examples of it during the course of this investigation. If I have read accurately, the moron is characterized by a happy, care-free, generous disposition, regardless of environment. The prevalence of this sort of mind and disposition, I judged, accounted in large measure for the ability of these women to endure their way of life. The moron is also characterized by susceptibility to suggestion, and most assuredly these women were. They moved often from city to city, simply because someone suggested that they should. In the same way, I judged, they accepted proposals of marriage or went off to live for a time with men who invited them to do so.

We had at that time a rescue home, so called, for wayward girls. It was managed, as such institutions usually are, by Christian men and women eager to save souls. Naturally I went to this home in search of information. It was a large brick building surrounded by extensive grounds and a stone wall about ten feet

high. The purpose of the wall was to prevent the inmates from escaping. Work, education, and religion were the means devised for reforming the girls. Work meant a hand laundry. Education comprised the primary grades. Along with religion went a strict discipline. The girls rose at six o'clock in the morning, and every hour of the day was scheduled.

A considerable number of these girls came to the city from farms and tiny crossroads villages. Their purpose was to find gayety, music, lights, dancing, less regulation, and, above everything else, less hard work. As a rule, sexual experiences would not be new or alarming to them. Some, however, became frightened merely by the strangeness of the city, lost their nerve, and tearfully appealed for help, confessing why they had come and what they had expected to do. Others responded to the appeals of Christian men and women who invaded the red-light district, imploring its residents to change their way of life. The moron mind is often maudlinly sentimental and references to broken-hearted mothers back on the farms brought converts. In short, they responded to the suggestion of reform almost as easily as to any other suggestion. Having gone to the rescue home, however, they discovered that a hand laundry in the city is no more pleasant than wash day on the farm; that discipline irked them regardless of geography; and that education was a bore. But, having got in, they couldn't get out without permission unless they managed to scale

that ten-foot wall. Never a month passed without one or more trying it and there was remarkable similarity in their methods, which I think throws at least some light on their mentality. They would show considerable cleverness in acquiring, concealing, and eventually using a rope or board or some other means of reaching the top of the wall, but rarely did one make arrangements for descending on the other side. The consequence, of course, was an appalling record of broken ankles, legs, arms, ribs, backs, and necks. No one in a position of authority ever seemed to feel that this wall might be a mistake. After each tragedy the opinion expressed was that the girl had acted like a fool, which, of course, was correct; but the thought often occurred to me that here was an institution designed to save fools and therefore under at least some slight obligation not to provide such a death-trap for them. During the entire course of my reign as boss I toyed with the idea of doing something about that horrible wall, but I never did. I had too many other troubles to risk such a hazardous effort on behalf of poor simpletons who could not possibly be of any use to me.

CHAPTER XLIII

Naturally it was a great relief to me to learn that I need not engage in mortal combat with a far-flung organization employing men to kidnap women and sell them into white slavery, but so strong was the belief in this hobgoblin that I dared not deny its existence, publicly. There must be a certain amount of pleasure in such alarms, because reassurance seemed to be the last thing the populace wanted. They were hot for new sensations. Sound politics called for colorful action, not calm words. I therefore suggested to Mayor Dixon that he issue orders to the police department that all bawdy-houses must be closed at once—not only closed, but vacated. And vacated, not only by the “boarders,” but by the proprietors also. Vacated should also mean removing the furnishings and dis-

continuing electric light service until it should be restored for some other tenant or owner. I drew up the order for him and concluded with the following:

"If any such house shall be found operating ten days after the date of this order, the policeman on whose beat it is found shall be dishonorably discharged. If two houses shall be found operating within the territory assigned to any lieutenant, he shall be dishonorably discharged. If, within any thirty-day period, beginning thirty days after the date of this order, three such houses shall be found in the city, the chief of police, all officers above the grade of patrolman, and all of the detectives shall be summarily dismissed."

Dixon looked at the document and grinned wryly. "That's the way to do it," he said, "and that's the only way. I should have thought of this long ago. It's perfectly simple when you know how."

“It needs just one more little clincher, mayor,” I said. “It needs a check-up beyond the control of the police. Let’s get Percy Ball and some of his old committeemen who attacked this evil long ago and ask them to import a few more detectives. Then let’s ask the women’s clubs to co-operate with Percy Ball’s committee. They’ll know what’s going on then, and it will make them feel better.” We called them by telephone to meet at ten o’clock the following morning in the mayor’s office. They did so, raised the necessary funds, and were well pleased with the arrangement.

After the meeting had adjourned, the mayor said to me: "You probably realize that we are going beyond the strict letter of the law in the proclamation I have issued to the police, so let's issue another inviting all citizens who wish to protest against this order to appear before me in the city council chamber for a public hearing."

"All right," I said. And that proclamation was also issued. He specified the following Monday morning at ten o'clock as the time of the hearing. The public paid no attention to it. There seemed not the remotest possibility of a protest. Nevertheless I arrived in the city council chamber at ten o'clock just to see if anybody would appear. And there sat Mike Callaghan! A reporter stuck his head in the door and, seeing only the three of us, departed. Three of us standing under the chandelier in that enormous high-ceilinged chamber. It was funny.

"Do you wish to be heard?" Dixon asked, expecting Mike to say no.

"I certainly do," Mike snapped.

"All right, sir, proceed." And the mayor mounted the dais and seated himself in the five-hundred-pound hand-carved oak chair of state. Every word said thereafter, no matter in how low a tone, echoed weirdly, as though we had been in an Egyptian tomb.

"My name is Michael Joseph Callaghan and I am a citizen and taxpayer, residing at number 106 Thurber Street," Mike began with solemn formality. "I appear

before Your Honor in response to Your Honor's invitation expressed in a proclamation dated the eighth day of this month. I appear for myself alone and on behalf of no client or organization, no financial interest, nor interest of any other sort except a profound respect for the common law, common sense, and sound public policy. I am opposed to Your Honor's order to the police department, first upon the ground that it is not only illegal, but in violation of the Constitution of this state and of the United States. I have prepared a list of citations of authorities upon those points, which I shall submit in writing so that Your Honor may refer it to the city attorney and have his advice. If he disagrees with me, discharge him at once as incompetent, report him to the State Bar Association, and institute disbarment proceedings against him instanter on the ground that he is a dangerous anarchist. So much for the legal aspects—" and Mike presented his typed notations of authorities.

"We come now to the question of public policy. In this and all other countries deriving their conceptions of law from England there is a popular belief that all sexual intercourse not sanctioned by the bonds of matrimony may be properly classified as adultery. And adultery is a crime described and prohibited by law in such countries, including our own. These laws grew out of a misconception of the nature of adultery as described and condemned in the Holy Bible. Among the

people of whose life and history the Bible treats, it was legal and customary for many men to have access to and control over, as well as responsibility for, more than one woman. Avoiding adultery did not mean for those men a life of chastity or monogamy as we understand monogamy. Legally and with the approval of society and in strict conformity with all of their moral conventions a man could possess and enjoy more than one woman. Under those conditions for him to poach upon his neighbor's household, seducing a wife or daughter or any other female under the protection of its roof, constituted the most flagrant, the most conscienceless, the most outrageous invasion, insult, and theft that I can imagine. Invasion and not the sexual act is the gravamen of adultery. Prostitution was tolerated by the Jews. Adultery constituted wanton, wilful, criminal disregard of the lawful contractual rights of an unoffending neighbor. It was therefore quite properly condemned in the strongest terms. But the Anglo-Saxon breed, not to mention others, have set up a new definition and then pretended that it describes the same crime. It does not. We live in a totally different social organization—and not only social, but economic.

“The male is not monogamous by nature in the first place, and under many different sets of conditions easily possible and constantly recurring he should not be for his own welfare, which eventually becomes the welfare of society. Whenever this nation rears a gen-

eration of he-virgins, I bid my country adieu. Prostitution has never been suppressed at any time or in any place where history worth recording was being made, nor will it ever be suppressed unless men shall cease to be male and the race stagger into the gray shadows of death.

“In our own present day and our own beloved city any father or brother or other male head of a family has right and truth on his side when he says to any male poaching or attempting to poach upon the females under his protection: ‘There is a place for the satisfaction of your desires. You call the women of my household whores by your actions.’ I leave it to Your Honor to say what penalty might properly be exacted under such circumstances. If you are in doubt, consult your Bible. A man has a property right in his wife and the women of his household because he dedicates property created by his labors to their maintenance. But if a woman becomes a self-supporting free agent, she holds the property rights in herself and may dispose of her person as she sees fit. All women do not prefer monogamy. I speak for the right of a woman to be chaste or not as she elects when economically free and I would grant her the right to sell her person as inalienable because it has ever been so in fact and always will be so, the law to the contrary notwithstanding. But once you prohibit the free exercise of this right upon the part of those who hold it by the laws of nature, you will not strike down the male instinct

upon which prostitution feeds—you will not strike down prostitution—but, instead, the definitive line between those who are not open to approach and those who are will disappear. In short, it will no longer be possible for the women themselves to know the basis upon which they are courted and desired. To put it bluntly, the bawdy-house as well as free love will move into the drawing-room, easily disguised in the general confusion. How shall an insulted wife or daughter recognize her insult when there is no longer such a thing as open prostitution, with its standard price and unmistakable label? Love and lust become confused. All I plead for is that a man shall be responsible for his women, as every real man chooses to be. If he wishes a prostitute, let him offer the price. If he wishes a wife, let him offer matrimony. As for the women, let them elect their own course. Then all men and all women will know where they are, what is proposed, and what they are doing. Any other arrangement leads only to confusion.”

Mike bowed and sat down. The mayor bowed and was quite plainly wondering what to do next. Mike came to his rescue. Rising again and speaking in a low tone, he said: “I just wanted to get this off my chest, Dixon. You’re in politics now, so if you’ve got the common sense of a goat, you’ll forget it and go on about your business. If I were still in politics, I wouldn’t have said a damn word about any of this. The women will be voting before you’re many years

older. Good-day, Your Honor." Mike picked up his hat and strode out of the chamber.

Mayor Dixon dislodged himself from his enormous chair and strolled down to where I was sitting. "He's smarter than I thought," he said. I nodded. I was thinking about Mike's forecast that women would soon be voting. Here was a matter worth contemplating; moreover, it helped me to suppress the desire to remark to Dixon that Mike had forgotten more about government than Dixon could be taught without causing brain fever.

Hinkley came to see me next morning. Cheerful and grinning, he said: "Boss, I've thought of a way to beat the mayor's proclamation."

"Chief," I said, "if you do, I think I'll take a pot shot at you myself. I'm sick of the red-light district. Close it up or get out and stay out."

He closed it and it has remained closed ever since. Assniation houses took its place, but at least that left each woman proprietor and manager of herself. Beyond that I doubt that anyone can go by either legal means or tyranny. We tried both.

CHAPTER XLIV

There are times when an experienced politician knows that a certain measure—or man—is going to win, even though arithmetic indicates defeat. I felt the approach of woman suffrage by this sixth sense. The arithmetic was so strongly against it, however, that I could not open the way into my conscious mind for my instinctive judgment until I heard old Mike's remark in the council chamber that morning. I had been evading the issue for a long time, and this was troublesome, because I happened to be a member of the legislature. But for my unsavory past connections the active suffragists would no doubt have harassed me as they harassed other politicians, but they took it for granted that I would be against them—also that I would not easily be beaten. The time had come, however, to make a decision.

Politically that was easy. Convinced that suffrage would soon win, there was nothing for me to do but be for it. I conferred with a committee of three women representing the strongest suffrage organization in the city—there were three or four of them by that time—and told them, in confidence, that I had always been in favor of suffrage and that they could count on my vote whenever it would be valuable. I told them also that it would be inadvisable for me to appear as their champion. To this they agreed—with some relief, I think. But the relief was mutual. I didn't like the leading suffragists any better than they liked me.

I never have understood what put suffrage across and I don't know now. The emotional reaction of the average man at that time—and especially the rural voters—when anyone argued that a man's wife had just as much right to vote as he, was hostile. Moreover, when the women argued that they would make politics clean, most men scoffed. Perhaps their scoffing was insincere. That is the best guess I can offer. At any rate, many men did finally come to believe—or at least hope—that the women's votes would be cast entirely on the side of sweetness and light. I tried to examine the problem in the following terms: "What selfish or generous or maudlin, or revengeful, or patriotic, or acquisitive or fear-inspired motive would explain an ordinary, average, wage-earning man's desiring his wife and mother and sister to vote?" The answer, based on observation of man-

kind, was "Approximately none." Nevertheless, I could feel the ground-swell. It was inexplicable, and yet there it was, inescapably clear.

The next question was: "What will the women do with their votes?" I could think of a great many things. I examined them one by one.

The wages of a married woman were legally the property of her husband, and since more and more married women were becoming wage-earners, the women would oppose that. It was unjust and I also opposed it.

If a married woman suffered an injury upon which a civil suit for damages could be based, her husband and not she would have to bring the suit—and, of course, collect the damages. The women would oppose that. And so did I, because it was unjust.

Women employees were outrageously underpaid and there were inadequate sanitary regulations and entirely too slight limitations upon the hours of labor. Women would attack all that. I agreed with them. Moreover, it would be the best of good politics to make some issues along this line as soon as the women voters could support a champion. I needed some issues of that kind.

Women would favor prohibition. Well, we already had it, and I saw no reason to doubt that it would continue to be the law. Better to have their support for enforcement.

Women would probably favor more liberal divorce laws since there was much discontent with marriage and nearly all of the divorce suits were filed by women. I favored more liberal divorce laws.

What would they do about the tariff? About good roads? Tax rates? And many other major problems affecting men and women equally? I judged that they would vote as the men advised. Or not at all.

Here was a matter for grave consideration. What proportion of the women would vote? Only half of the men ordinarily voted. I estimated that about fifteen per cent of the women would vote, unless some issue aroused their enthusiastic interest. Well, that is precisely the sort of electorate with which a boss deals most successfully. I could find issues that would appeal to them when I wanted to appeal to them, and at other times depend upon the stupidity of inept political opponents to let them alone. On the whole I could see no reason for a political boss to fear the woman voter, nor do I now. She is no more patriotic, no keener in judgment, and not more devoted to the duties of citizenship than her husband. I welcomed her to the ballot box and did my humble part to give her access to it.

Years and years and more years of experience will be required to make her a formidable power in politics. She started with the wrong leadership and she still has it. To put the matter bluntly, most of the

women leaders are hitting at men rather than fighting for women. During their constructive and sane interludes of fighting for women the men become their allies and they win their battles, because men love women even when women treat them unjustly. But the women leaders are inspired—if I have seen this show with clear eyes—by the memories of tyrannical fathers or selfish elder brothers, perhaps both. Some, I suspect, have taken too seriously the complaints of waspish mothers. They try to make public issues of what were in fact their private difficulties. What they would really like to do is slap and bite and scratch. I felt that emotion in the three members of the suffragist committee with which I conferred. And I don't believe it was personal.

The women who have aroused my sympathy as a legislator eager to enact just laws were not like those women at all. My heart yearns for laws that women need and my brain approves the emotion, but when I discussed specific legislation with women representatives of women, I often felt that they as individuals needed a sound spanking. Time after time when I was saying to these representative women: "I agree with you and I will support your bill," I felt that what they really wanted to say to me was: "You're licked, you cur. You wouldn't grant any woman anything if you weren't afraid of her." And that wasn't true. I wasn't afraid of them. As politicians I held them in contempt. I had matched wits with some of the cleverest minds

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the scene of my political operations afforded, and I had tied them into bow-knots. I knew that I could make these women divide, and fight each other, just as my male opponents had done while I tipped the scales to my advantage. When I said that I agreed with them, I did exactly that. They often brought forward measures that would not have occurred to me and I welcomed their co-operation. Instead of seeing this obvious fact, they continued to behave as neurotics with an emotional urge to slap anything male in order to obtain revenge for injuries about which I knew nothing. As representatives of women I found them a net loss. But I managed to remember that behind these representatives were uncounted thousands of women far more typical of womanhood. These inarticulate individuals it was my duty to keep in mind.

The woman leader of the remote future will be able to say: "Look here, brother, here's something that affects us women and I'll explain it to you. You're just a poor, benighted male, so you wouldn't understand the tremendous importance of this proposition; but we know your heart's in the right place. I'll tell you what it's all about." When that type of leader comes—the sister, not the scratcher—we shall have women suffrage. And it is coming, I believe. But not for this generation. Perhaps twenty years hence—perhaps a hundred. Women still respond to these scratchers who dream dreams of defeating the male. They'll never do that.

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In my time I played fast and loose with women leaders, lied to them, espoused their causes when opportunism dictated; evaded, postponed, compromised; and was consistent on only one point—I disliked all of them. They dealt with me according to the same formula. However, I worked with them, while other politicians referred to them with unprintable epithets. And they still do.

CHAPTER XLV

After witnessing Bagley's and Dean's bout with the Eel, which was really a stinging defeat for my plans, I turned back to state affairs with considerable relief and prepared to play my part in the next gubernatorial campaign. I have perforce omitted the details of Governor Tom's interesting and constructive administrations because my part in them was not so active as I had planned. My principal contribution turned out to be advice and applause; he was a wise governor and no slouch as a politician. Our friendship grew with our alliance. My time, however, was taken up with the rising tide of local problems—a tide that never receded. Both of us understood how necessary it was for me to retain a commanding position in my own bailiwick in order to continue playing an important part

in state politics; knowledge of state affairs is not enough, a man must also control some votes somewhere in order to give weight to his counsel. I continued in undisputed control of my organization, but the nature of my cohorts changed steadily—and not so very slowly, either. By this time there was such a marked difference between the average intelligence and especially the character of the personnel of the state and city machine that turning from the local organization to state affairs was like transferring activities to an alien empire. The city machine was getting worse daily.

During Governor Tom's second administration his attorney-general died and he had appointed to fill out the unexpired term an excellent young lawyer named Wallace Farnsworth. The governor had a genius for finding brains and character, and we had consolidated our state machine until it was really formidable.

The governor wanted Farnsworth to succeed him and I was entirely willing provided Farnsworth could outline a platform that promised success. The governor assured me that he could, so the three of us met one afternoon in the governor's office to discuss the matter. Farnsworth proposed, as his paramount issue, codification of the state laws. Well as I knew the need for this, it seemed to me about the most difficult thing a candidate could select to present to the populace and I said as much.

The very word "codification" is unusual and has a

clumsy sound. Strongly as I favored codification, I objected to it as a paramount issue. Lawyers often discussed the matter and I had never heard one express himself with sufficient ease and clarity to make me believe that a layman would follow his argument.

The governor was impressed by what I said and suggested to Farnsworth that we had better devise some other issue on which to elect him and put over codification afterwards. He demurred on the ground that a great many of the older lawyers in the legislature would oppose codification secretly and that he couldn't put it across unless it had been a paramount issue in the campaign. Moreover, few would dare to fight it openly on the stump. That argument was absolutely sound.

“I’ll tell you what I’ll do,” Farnsworth said. “I’ll make a test speech on this subject. I have some minor speaking dates right now. I’ll try to explain to an ordinary audience the importance of codification and you arrange to have there two high-school students, a boy and a girl, one housewife, one laborer, and one farmer. If they can’t tell you what codification of the state law means after they have heard me speak, I agree not to run. Will you accept that challenge?” It was so obviously fair that I did.

He spoke one night before an audience of about three hundred in the auditorium of the Y.M.C.A. in the state capital. His speech was remarkably lucid, and short, too. I waited three days and then inter-

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viewed the high-school girl I had sent to hear him.

“About twelve thousand new laws are passed every year in this country,” she said, summarizing Farnsworth’s speech. “Hardly any laws are ever repealed straight out. But lots are repealed by accident. It is the custom to put into new laws that they repeal all former laws that don’t agree with the new laws. And so lots of laws are repealed, but nobody knows it. Then when cases are tried, the judges decide whether the law has been repealed. After a while the law books don’t show the laws even when there are stacks and stacks of law books. You have to go to the other books that show what the judges have said. And you can’t always be sure even then, because you may be trying a suit on a law that the judges haven’t noticed yet. The lawyers are confused by this. There is delay in the trials, and for poor people it is too expensive. Sometimes the delay makes it come out so that the poor people never will have a chance to get justice. And this makes it happen that the people with the most money get the most justice, and the people without any money can’t get any. So what ought to be done is to have a committee of lawyers go through all of the laws and throw out those that have been repealed and then there wouldn’t be so many books and a lawyer could look through just a few books and find out what was the law, and this would make it cheaper. Then the poor people could get justice, too.”

That was enough for me—I didn’t waste time hear-

ing my other four guinea pigs. Here was a paramount issue that would not only make the welkin ring, but perhaps save me from eventual disaster at home, where the lawyers were getting out of bounds. Governor Tom and I put our heads together, set our machinery to work, and nominated Farnsworth.

He made one of the most brilliant campaigns that it has ever been my pleasure to observe. His speeches—today no less than then—would make excellent reading lessons for the primary grades of the public schools. The whopping majority I delivered him in my county could have been stricken from his total vote and still he would have been elected overwhelmingly.

Then came the delicate business of appointing three lawyers to codify the state laws. Being a sound politician, Farnsworth was open to suggestions; he wanted this commission to have powerful support.

The three men who could deliver that support were Senator Cotton, Senator Logwood, and I, since each of us had tremendous strength in his own district. The governor told me that we three should name the commission—unless we were so foolish as to nominate impossibles. My hopes for the future were involved in their job, so I wanted it done right. I had insisted upon naming one member of the codification commission from my county, but that was solely a trading proposition. I knew of no lawyer in my district who would take the job that I really wished to see appointed. The man I favored was Paul F. Jones, of Cran-



ford County. I had met him as a member of the legislature. He was one of the sort who know too much law to get rich practicing—essentially a constitutional lawyer, but residing in a small community that would not raise a constitutional question once a year—and then some other lawyer would have the case. He should have been a judge, but scorned the political maneuvers necessary to either appointment or election. I knew that he would do more work and better work as a member of the codification commission than the other two members combined. Fortunately I also knew that his appointment would be good politics both for the governor and for Senator Cotton, in whose district he resided. Senator Cotton would be consulted by the governor, so I consulted Cotton first, recommending Jones and promising my support if he should urge Jones's appointment. His only interest was to be recognized and show his power, so he nominated Jones. That suited me so well that I resolved to nominate a weak man whom Jones could dominate.

Next I went to see Senator Logwood. He was an elderly, scholarly man with silver hair and a complexion of white marble, a fascinating person who looked like a saint, knew it, and assumed appropriate manners. He played politics for the sheer joy of the game, having long since accumulated ample means, and still enjoying a lucrative law practice. Playing the game for the fun of it meant to him, however, an outlet for mischievous and satanic impulses that a long life of



hard work had suppressed in their natural season. I had long ago detected this urge to deviltry behind his oily exterior, so I carried my wits with me when I went to interview him.

"Whom will Cotton recommend?" he asked. I told him.

"Good man," he commented. "Able lawyer," and sipped from a glass of water. "Whom shall you nominate?"

"I've been thinking of Harvey Barr," I said. Barr was about seventy years of age, but had been a remarkable lawyer in his day and still had friends in all parts of the state. I knew that his appointment would be good politics. Of course he would work very slowly, but that would leave more to Jones, which I favored. Not being too keenly interested in the job, Barr would probably let Jones dominate it.

"Barr is an excellent man," Logwood commented with warmth. "Half a century of experience. Yes, an excellent man," and he refilled his glass from a beautiful silver pitcher.

"Whom shall you recommend?" I asked.

"Um—m—m," he rumbled, "to tell you the truth, I am not very keenly interested. I know of no one in my own district I especially desire."

It amused me that none of us was enthusiastic over anyone in his own district.

"Under the circumstances," Senator Logwood continued, "the courteous thing to do is ask the governor

if he has a choice of his own, or, perhaps, a political debt to pay. I'll call him up." Suiting the action to the word, he lifted the telephone receiver. I gathered from what I heard that the governor was inclined to pay a debt by appointing Bob Smedley if that was agreeable to Logwood and me. Smedley was a famous trial lawyer, an eloquent speaker; during the campaign he had literally taken off his coat and rolled up his sleeves on behalf of Farnsworth. The appointment was good politics and I could see no harm in it. Smedley lacked the judicial temperament, being a fighter, but he had energy. My guess was that he would pose and wear his honors, leaving most of the work to Jones. And again that suited me. The appointment was agreed to by telephone. Then Senator Logwood said: "Governor, I'd like to name the secretary of the commission, if that is agreeable." I felt no desire to intervene further than I already had, so Logwood nominated a friend of his, a minor politician then holding a clerkship in the state auditor's office.

I was in high good humor during the trip home, feeling that this whole matter had worked out in an eminently satisfactory manner. Two days later the appointments were announced publicly by the governor. On the following day Mike Callaghan came to see me.

"Why did you want to dynamite codification?" he asked.

"Dynamite it?" I exclaimed. "Why, I've been all over the state looking after it."

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"Well, you played hell," was his next remark. "Harvey Barr and Bob Smedley hate each other like poison. I pulled those two off of each other's necks twelve years ago in a district courtroom."

"I didn't know anything about that," I confessed. "I wonder why they accepted the appointments."

"They want to get at each other again. You won't have to wait long to find that out."

In spite of this disquieting news I remained hopeful; after all, an enmity twelve years old between men who had had no contact since might be forgotten. But it wasn't. Three weeks after the codification commission organized for work, the governor asked me to come to the capital for a conference. I found Jones in his office, waiting to report to the two of us.

"Barr," he said, "has assigned to Smedley the most difficult and intricate tasks, obviously because he thinks Smedley is not equal to them. And I'm afraid he's right. There is venom in this. It was a serious mistake to name him chairman, but he is the oldest and the only member of the commission who has served on the bench. He wants to make a fool of Smedley. For himself he has selected only a small part of the work—just certain phases of it that interest him. To me he has assigned an enormous quantity of relatively unimportant matters. I'm what you might call chairman of the committee on waste paper. My only purpose in informing you of this is to put you on notice that we shall probably consume three or four years.

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If you wish to take any action to prevent such a waste of time, that's your business. I make no recommendations and I am going to discharge my duties to the very best of my ability."

There was nothing we could do about this situation at once. After waiting a suitable length of time the governor might ask for some resignations, but for the present we should have to wait. Personally I was still not very much alarmed. I had wanted Jones to do the job anyway, and now it appeared certain that he would. I told him frankly why I had done my best to have him appointed and promised him all the aid I could possibly give. The governor also assured him of his confidence and support and we parted feeling rather optimistic.

A week later there was a sensational newspaper headline reporting that one of the women secretaries of the codification commission had thrown a bottle of ink at another woman secretary and knocked her senseless. An amazing and unprecedented occurrence in an office ranking in dignity with the supreme court! I could not dismiss the matter as a coincidence. There was something behind this. I wrote a letter to Jones expressing these suspicions and asking him for a confidential report.

"The secretary of the commission," he wrote in reply, "plainly is acting under orders to prevent us from accomplishing any work. He has combed the state

capitol for quarrelsome, incompetent women who have feuds of long standing. They do nothing but fight. This is a veritable madhouse. I have taken the matter up with Barr and Smedley, but they will take no action. They enjoy these fights. So there we are. I am beginning to fear that not even I shall work. Frankly, I think codification is blasted."

I could see now that I had been beaten by Senator Logwood after all. The legislature was in session so I called on him one evening with a view to getting at his motives.

"Senator," I said, "you and I have played politics too long for it to be necessary to mince words with each other. You appointed the secretary of the codification commission and he is making hash of its work. I want codification of the state laws. So I've got to get rid of him. Fortunately there is still time to tinker with the appropriation bill and I have the governor's support, so I am going to see that his salary is fixed at exactly five dollars a month if he doesn't resign tomorrow."

"That's all right with me," the senator answered, smiling his saintly smile. "Of course he will not resign until after the legislature adjourns, because I should like to see the salary of his office remain at five dollars a month for the coming two years."

"I don't understand why you are so strongly opposed to codification, senator," I said. "You have a



large practice, you have more than enough money, and you surely must agree with me that codification would be a good thing for the state."

The senator lighted a cigar, gazed at the ceiling meditatively, for nearly a minute, and then said: "Young man, I am going to tell you precisely why I have done what I have done, and then you are going to forget it, because this battle is over and you are licked. I know you're a good sport. You'll take the matter up again some day and win—some day when I'm not interested. Of course, while I'm interested, you'll always lose. Very well! Now for the story: When I was a long-legged sliver of a kid lawyer, all choked up with ideals and likely to lose control of my Adam's apple if anyone mentioned Abraham Lincoln or John Marshall, I hung out my little shingle across from the post office and general store of a country mudhole. And pretty soon I got a case. Yes, sir, I got a case. Very exciting, that first case, isn't it? Well, not only was this my first case, but it remained for a long time my only case and I had plenty of time to work on it. Yes, sir, plenty of time. I worked on it nearly every night until midnight. Loved the thing like a baby. Only a twenty-five-dollar fee in it, but—well, you understand.

"When that case was finally called for trial, I knew it forwards and backwards. Knew all the witnesses and all their relatives. Knew their dogs and recognized the squeaks of the brakes on their wagons. But



I had overlooked one point. Just one little point. I couldn't help that, because I was poor and couldn't afford all the library I needed. Fact is, there wasn't enough library anywhere within reach to cover that point. The statute on which I had based my suit had been repealed according to a decision of the state supreme court rendered in a case I'd never heard of. But I went into the courthouse and read my petition and fluttered round among my witnesses and reassured my clients and looked at the jurors—you know, proud, confident, ready to show that I knew my business. Then opposing counsel rose and entered a general demurrer, and the court sustained it and I had lost my case. It took about five minutes to lose that case. No testimony, no jury. Just 'demurrer sustained' and the trial was over and I was a broken-hearted young man. They made a monkey out of me. And not only that—I wore old clothes until my shirt tail was peeping through the seat of my trousers before I got another chance. Didn't eat so very well, either. Hard jolt, that case was.

"But I lived. And I made a great and patriotic resolution, which was that just as soon as I found myself thirty days ahead of starvation, I would undertake a campaign for codification of the state laws. Why, my friend, I was working for codification eighteen—yes, twenty years ago. And spending money that would have been better invested in socks and underwear, because scarcely anybody paid any attention to me. The

young fellows who saw things as I did because of the same experience didn't have any influence; and the others who had already found their way through this jungle were used to it and saw no reason to get excited.

"Well, the jungle has grown thicker and darker, as you know; and there are more man-eating tigers in it now than ever before. But I know my way through and you know your way through, so why should we worry? You're not so old as I am, but you're old enough to know what tremendous changes have come over the practice of law during the last twenty years. The courts have about broken down. There have been times when that worried me, somewhat, but, as I think it over, I'm not so sure that it isn't a pretty good thing. More than half of the lawsuits filed are silly, anyway. In most cases people could get together and settle their difficulties without going before a jury if they were a mind to. I finally drifted into just that kind of practice. You know I represent in a sort of an indirect way some of the biggest corporations in this state, although I'm seldom counsel of record. They come to me or I go to them when they're in trouble and we talk things over. We nearly always find a way out that doesn't lead through a courtroom. I've lost my taste for courtrooms. Give me a couple of potential litigants who have got themselves all balled up so that one party thinks he has a case at law and I'll bet you my right leg that I can talk them into a sound, fair

agreement. That's the kind of law business I've been doing now for ten years and it pays better than any other sort. A ten-thousand-dollar fee gives me no thrill; I've collected a hatful of them. Why, right here in this city we've got an arbitration committee that was started by the Chamber of Commerce and we get rid of more cases with less ill will than any court I ever saw. I do lots of business before that committee. And it owes its existence to the fact that our state laws resemble a ball of yarn that had attended a convention of kittens. I'm not sure that our defective legal machinery isn't working toward a great and profitable reform in the administration of justice. The American people have amazing adaptability; when their legal system cracks, instead of going to hell in a hanging basket, as some hidebound nation of tradition-worshippers would, they just set up new machinery and go merrily on their way. They've got good will and energy. Courts don't foster good will even at their best. They are by nature excellent places for airing and fostering ill will.

"And now I want to tell you why your bread is buttered on the same side as mine. You're a good lawyer and you've got a sound mind. Pretty soon your experience in public life will have taught you more law, in a practical sense, than you ever could have learned anywhere else. Not only that, you'll have enormous prestige. In short, you will be exactly the sort of man who can talk over a case with another able lawyer and

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concoct some sort of operating agreement, or compromise that will give all parties substantial justice. There's big money in that. So think this over and don't sacrifice your own best interests by going to the rescue of a mildewed legal system. Listen here! Suppose you purify it today; legislatures go on grinding out laws by the thousands, don't they? The job would be undone in less than ten years, anyway. Yes, in less time than that you'd have the same old tangle."

"But, senator," I objected, "my best interests right now demand codification. I'm not undertaking this entirely unselfishly. I need it no less than the state."

"That's unfortunate," he answered coldly, "because you are not going to get it. After I am dead, this state can have anything it wants; but while I live, there will be no codification. They wouldn't let me have it when I poured out my sweat and my money and my prayers, and, God damn them, they can take the consequences. Good-day."

I had never before heard the senator utter even a mild oath, nor did I ever hear one from his lips again. Merely as a gesture I got rid of the secretary he had foisted upon our commission, but it brought very little improvement. Codification had been dynamited.

CHAPTER XLVI

I returned home just in time to receive the news that our country had declared war on Germany.

The whole interval of the war can be and I think should be dismissed from this narrative as an interval during which we danced to the tunes broadcast from Washington and did scarcely anything on our own initiative. Suddenly we all became tin-pot patriots, doing nothing of any real value, and conscious of the fact, but playing the game and thankful that so few recognized the absurdity. Was there a rumor of spies? Good! We hunted spies. Were there slackers? Fine! We denounced and hunted slackers, taking care, of course, not to find the few real ones. Should every man conserve soap and wheat? Excellent! We yammered and frothed over soap and wheat. Perhaps

after all, it had some value. For all I know, we home-fire-tending politicians may have helped to win the war. Let's hope so. But from my point of view as a practical politician it was a period of utter silliness. The tunes originated in Washington and we danced as marionettes on strings.

Out of the war came only one development of vital importance to me as head of a political machine: the leavening minority of poor, worthy, honest men in the organization had shrunk alarmingly.

It was not only that wages were better and jobs more plentiful; there had also been a shifting and scattering of wage-earners from one end of the country to the other. Once men had moved from village or farm to the city or from town to town or city to city; now they moved across state lines; not one state line at a time, but half a dozen. Our populace had suddenly begun to behave after the manner of grains of pop-corn over hot coals. A census of the city would have shown thousands more wage-earners than we had before the war, but nearly a fourth of them had recently come from other states, while at least two-thirds of those we had before the war had gone elsewhere. This was a terrible blow to me, because these newcomers seemed to have no need of my organization. Worse, they showed very little interest in local politics. For me this was the beginning of the end.

Shortly after the war there was a national epidemic of strikes, and it seemed to me that locally we had


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somewhat more than our fair quota. The prevalence of these disturbances soon became alarming, especially in view of the fact that word was being passed along from high officials in Washington that revolutionists operating on the Russian plan and under Bolshevik direction were attempting to overturn the government. Industrialists and conservatives were quite generally alarmed. The unaccountable behavior of the strikers made me wonder for a time if they really were preparing the way for revolution. Scarcely any of their strikes presented clear-cut issues that had developed gradually. On the contrary, strikes were called with amazing suddenness and most of them ended almost as suddenly as they had begun. Moreover, there was a tendency toward violence that I had never seen before. In fact, this tendency had spread to many other fields.

Crime was also accompanied by more violence. Where once it had been the custom of bank-robbers to operate by night, they now marched into country banks at noon and looted them by daylight. Superficial observers commented that this was a natural aftermath of the war: that human life would seem less sacred to men familiar with European battlefields. Personally I found one serious error in that explanation—namely, the bank-robbers who were identified had not been in the army. Very few of the crimes of violence were committed by ex-soldiers. That set me to thinking and I determined to get the whole truth of this

matter. One day our local police captured two bank-robbers who were wanted in a neighboring county. There was no doubt whatever of their guilt or that they would be convicted. I called on them while they were in our jail, being introduced by their lawyer, who was himself a crook, and talked with them for several hours.

They informed me that the new method of robbing banks had nothing whatever to do with the war. Previously it had been the custom to spy out the lay of the land, then come by night with explosives and expensive and elaborate mechanical and electrical equipment, the purpose of which could not possibly be denied if ever it should be captured. At least one expert was required to open the bank's safe. The resulting explosion would give the alarm and they would have to work with the utmost haste in order to get away with a fair margin of safety. In the dark they often made errors, went the wrong way, failed to get all of the loot, and not infrequently wrecked their automobile. Operating by daylight, they found the bank's safe already open, their approach was far safer by day than by night, and they surprised the persons in the bank unprepared. Not having to blow the safe, they needed no expert and no equipment. Running away by daylight, they could go much faster and with less danger of accident. A short trip and they were ready to separate. It was a comparatively safe mode of operation until the lumbering defensive forces should de-

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vise means to meet their strategy. That was all there was to that—and all there is to it now. Improved methods of operation always spread through the criminal world more rapidly than through the industrial world. This new system of robbing country banks could be applied to jewelry shops or any other sort of establishment where desirable loot might be found. From this fact flowed the epidemic of sensational robberies that has not yet subsided.

The national epidemic of strikes represented nothing more than the irritated condition of nerves strained by the ordeal through which all of us had passed. Some of our industrialists had taken contracts at war prices and recruited labor with blithe indifference to the effect upon neighboring plants. There were skilled workmen in our community who had changed jobs ten times within twelve months. But there were others who had not been in a position to profiteer and they had seen the value of their wages decline about fifty per cent. The industrialists felt that all labor had gone crazy, and labor felt that, no matter how much wages increased, the working-men were still being robbed. Everyone was in a bad humor.

In the midst of this far from pleasant state of affairs a row broke out between two rival organizations of truck-drivers. Both promptly demanded exclusive recognition by their bewildered employers, who did not know what the row was about. Nor were they granted time to learn. Smarting under the injustice,

they determined to recognize neither organization, but to recruit new forces. This proved fairly easy since driving a motor vehicle is about the most desirable occupation our country has to offer in the opinion of at least a fourth of our young men. But the new drivers wrecked from three to ten trucks every day. Presently a delegation of employers called on the mayor to report that these were not bona-fide accidents, but that men had been employed by the strikers and furnished with old cars and trucks to harass the new drivers by stopping in front of them or running into them. Some of these accidents led to fist fights in which the strike-breaking truck-drivers invariably came off second. I doubted this yarn until I learned that old cars could be bought for as low as twenty-five dollars, and that a suspiciously large number of strikers themselves had been in these accidents. The employers asked for a policeman on every truck, but that was absolutely impossible. There were at least five times as many trucks as policemen. They then announced that they would employ guards. The matter rested there over one week-end, the mayor being under the impression that this would probably settle the matter.

On the following Monday, however, there were as many fights as ever, the only difference being that now the guards won every combat. All of these encounters were so sharp and short that, although men were taken to hospitals with cracked skulls and other serious injuries, it was rarely possible to prosecute, for

lack of witnesses. About the best the police could do was make arrests on charges of reckless driving. Innocent bystanders were making it a point to get away as rapidly as possible when these outbreaks occurred.

During the following week guns came into play, taking the place of fists, clubs, or similar weapons. Three men were killed—and not one of them was known in our community. Two, it developed, had recently come from Chicago, and the other from Saint Louis. After a few more bloody battles between these combative strangers the truth began to dawn upon us: both sides had imported gangsters. Every time an arrest was made, powerful influence would be brought to bear to quash the case. No doubt those who intervened on behalf of these warriors thought their influence had proved effective when nothing came of the arrests; but the truth of the matter was that the police still could not find witnesses. The well-behaved citizen going about his business did not even object to these murders. In fact, I think he looked forward to the happy day when both sides would be wiped out. But situations of that kind do not work out in accord with such simple hopes. These gangsters were prospering and the supply appeared to be unlimited.

One of the most amazing features of this disturbance was that the number of assaults continued to increase even after the strike was in fact broken. Presently a large proportion of the original strikers were back on the seats of the trucks they had been driving

before the trouble started. One faction of the strikers no longer held meetings and it appeared obvious that their organization had ceased to exist. The other mustered less than a tenth of its original membership. But still the fighting went on. I investigated and learned that this situation had simply become a battle royal between two rival gangs.

The employers had hired one gang to serve as guards, and the strikers had hired another gang to assist them in wrecking the trucks driven by strike-breakers. At first the members of these two gangs had been willing enough to fight each other, but when the strike collapsed and with it their original sources of revenue, they decided to prey upon the trucking business without employment. Nearly all of the truck-drivers recruited as strike-breakers were gone and the original strikers were back on their jobs with no increase in wages; not only that, but they now had no organization at all. The gangsters simply carved out two territories, which they controlled by threats of violence; and they collected toll from merchants and trucking companies for permission to do business. Such fights as continued to occur usually related to questions of jurisdiction between the two gangs. The employers confessed that it made little difference whether they fired their imported guards or kept them at work, they had to pay toll to them just the same in order to protect their merchandise in transit. It seemed to me that the time had come for the police to

act, so I went down into the district where this trucking business centered, to find out what the police knew about the situation. Near one of the largest freight platforms I found fifteen men ranged in a circle on the asphalt pavement, shooting craps. They had a pair of dice as large as pigeon eggs, and apparently no bet was less than one dollar, because all of the money in the ring was paper currency. Across the street I found the policeman assigned to that beat and questioned him. I had known him for years. Without hesitation he told me that if he should stop the game, he would unquestionably be assassinated within a week. Under the circumstances he compromised by collecting a toll of ten dollars a day. The players, he said, comprised both the truck-drivers who were likely to be assaulted at any time, and the gangsters who were likely to commit the assaults. This was their neutral ground. Between battles they shot craps, drank and ate together, and found life merry.

"But aren't the truck-drivers bitter about losing their strike?" I asked. It seemed to me that they would hold these outlaws accountable for their defeat.

"Well," the policeman said, "they weren't exactly defeated. They quit. I'll tell you how it was. In the old days there used to be inspectors on the job when freight was unloaded and the drivers couldn't ever get away with anything. All they ever got in the old days was their pay. But after the imported guards went on the job, everything changed. When a car of chickens,

say, was opened, they'd pick out one or two for themselves and one or two for the driver, and then they'd pick out one or two for the inspector. He could take his present or get a crack on the jaw that would send him to the hospital. Everything's different down here now. These drivers are living high. They don't have to buy anything to eat any more. They get their cut of whatever comes in: eggs, vegetables, meat—whatever comes in. They'd have been fools to go on striking after the way things changed. That's why they quit striking and went back to work. After what the gangsters did for them they don't need a union. Everybody's happy down in this district now. Plenty of money for crap games, plenty of booze, plenty to eat, and plenty of excitement; they like fights."

"But aren't the merchants after you to break up this stealing?"

"No. They can stand it. Business is good, And, anyway, they haven't got a chance."

"Why not?"

"Well, in the old days this kind of a thing would have been a fight for the police. We'd have bumped off some of them and they'd have bumped off some of us—and maybe swung for it. But not now."

"Not now! Why not now?"

"Well, these fellows that they brought in wouldn't bother much with fighting the police. They'd go and bump off whoever sicked the police on to them. They wouldn't care if he was uptown in a marble palace and

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never came down here. They'd go and get him. And if they couldn't get him, they'd take a pot shot at his wife or mess up one of his kids. They're tough. It's easier to lose a few chickens than to tie into these fellows. And, anyway, what's the use when everybody's doing fine?"

"I see," I said, and trudged sadly out of the trucking district. Certainly I was not a czar down there. And from time to time I discovered other places where I was no longer czar.

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## CHAPTER XLVII

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As a result of this strike and the incidental disorder we soon had fourteen murder cases awaiting trial. There should have been twenty-two, but eight cases failed to reach the docket, principally because witnesses were either bribed or terrorized. The district attorney told me that he was reasonably sure of convictions in only four of the fourteen cases. As a matter of fact, he obtained convictions in two cases. Where acquittals were reasonably certain, counsel for the defendants were pressing for prompt trials, and in the other cases they were successfully battling for delay. Court rules under these circumstances are fearfully unfair to a prosecutor; the defendant is entitled to a prompt trial, and when he wants it, he can get it; but when he doesn't want it, there are at least a dozen

ways to avoid it. If nothing better is available, the defendant's lawyer will plead illness. If, however, the prosecuting attorney pleads illness or any other excuse, his chances are less than one in ten for winning delay when the defendant vigorously opposes it.

Our sudden and all too bounteous crop of murder cases dwindled away week after week without a death penalty. There was only one conviction out of the first seven trials. The inevitable result was severe criticism of all the law-enforcement officers involved, from police to prosecuting attorney. The American public never fails, when confronting a situation such as this, to be shocked and righteously indignant, but it is less than fair. Our criminal law is such that it could not possibly trap more than a very few of the obviously guilty who had forfeited sympathy along with innocence. And even behind this our police systems are such that they couldn't cope with anything very clever or resolute in criminality. That is why we have more unsolved murder mysteries every year than all western Europe and Great Britain combined. But even after a fairly clear case against a defendant is ready for presentation to a jury, the contest in the courtroom is governed by rules and traditions that make the prosecutor the under dog.

Any sudden flare-up of crime in any community will always reveal the fact that we are not equipped to deal with it. Unfortunately the revelation comes to each community as applicable only to itself. The press and

public will criticize the local police, the local prosecutor, and the local political situation, and bring forward nothing more constructive than the suggestion that a remedy must be sought in the forthcoming election by choosing different officials. We do that over and over again. If any generalizations grow out of the crisis, they are likely to take the form of a remark that quite recently the public has grown sloppily sentimental or callous to crime. As a matter of fact you can go back any number of years and examine the statistics and you will find that our national record on law-enforcement has never been notably better than it now is, especially with regard to murder. There were 1,266 homicides in the United States in the year 1881—and ninety executions. In 1895, when the number of homicides had soared to 10,500, there were only one hundred and thirty-two executions—an increase of less than fifty per cent. Incidentally the maximum number of executions for any year between 1881 and 1903 was one hundred and thirty-two. That total was first reached in 1894 (when there were 9,800 homicides) and was repeated in 1895 (when there were 10,500 homicides); thereafter the number declined. In 1903 there were 8,976 homicides and one hundred and twenty-four executions. From 1881 to 1903, inclusive, the largest number of homicides for any one year occurred during 1896, the score being 10,652, and in that year the number of executions was one hundred and twenty-two, ten less than during 1894 and 1895.



Incidentally it would be impossible for a statistical report to show the proportions between murder and executions in as bad a light as the facts warrant, for the reason that we can easily find out the number of executions, while no one could possibly know how many murders are committed in a year. We know how many cases of "a killing" are officially reported and investigated, but obviously all of the murders are not investigated. Where a true murder is a complete success, it would be quite likely to have the appearance of death from natural causes, accident, or suicide and never be listed as a homicide.

I used the word "homicide" here as meaning the killing of one human being by another. It might be a criminal act or it might not. That is for the courts to determine. Murder, of course, is a crime, but our newspapers have for so many years used the word as though it meant nothing more than "a killing" that I judge there may be some confusion in the public mind. All that statistics can bring to our attention is the number of homicides officially reported and the number of convictions for murder. Even that much, however, is illuminating.

Not only is our legal machinery inadequate when functioning at its best, but during approximately one-fourth of each year it ceases to function. Most of our courts are inactive during the months of June, July, and August. That custom was established when nearly all of our population lived in the country; men

were too busy with their crops during the summer months to attend court; during the winter months they welcomed the courthouse activities as a diversion. But with the rise of industries and cities the ancient rural custom of long vacations for the courts continued.

Murder is only slightly checked in this country by fear of the law. There would be a great many more murders if there were more people inclined to commit them. The proof of this is that from time to time great disturbances such as financial panics have caused sudden increases in the number of atrocious murders without appreciably increasing the number of convictions. I have already cited the figures for 1894, '95, and '96, during which years there was such widespread economic depression that thousands of men became tramps. Horrible murders were committed during those years, with robbery as the motive. Let us go back to those figures and look at them again. In 1881 there were 1,266 homicides reported. In 1894 there were 9,800; in 1895, 10,500; and in 1896, 10,652. And here are the records for executions: in 1881 there were 90; in 1894, 132; in 1895, 132; and in 1896, 122.

About all our system accomplishes toward the suppression of crime is to throw the defendant into the hands of the lawyers to be stripped of his goods. We take it for granted that the lawyers may use any methods they please to free their clients. They are not supposed to conduct themselves as officers of the court

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aiding in the administration of justice. They become virtually accessories after the fact. Since victory rather than justice is their goal, what more natural than that they should charge all the traffic will bear? He is a reckless man who commits murder in this country, because he is almost certain to be ruined. But his life is in no great danger.

As far back as 1908 William Howard Taft in a public address stated the gist of the situation as follows:

"The administration of the criminal law in the United States is a disgrace to civilization. The prevalence of crime and fraud is due largely to the failure of the law and its administration to bring criminals to justice. The trial of a criminal seems like a game of chance with all the chances in favor of the criminal, and if he escapes he seems to have the sympathy of a sporting public."

The same declaration would be true today—and for the same reasons. No notable change in the situation, as to either details or fundamentals, has taken place.

However, I couldn't make this speech to the public as a political argument at the time our local court dockets were cluttered with murder cases. In politics, when all is going well, you get much credit for doing things that you didn't do and for being the sort of person that you aren't; but when the breaks of the game are going against you, invariably you are pilloried and perhaps crucified for things that you didn't do or couldn't prevent or for being a sort of person that you

are not. The practical politician who is qualified for the rôle of boss accepts the slings and arrows with the bouquets and retains his poise. The game is hectic and the luck breaks for and against you with rapidity as well as insanity; consequently there is sound reason for keeping steady nerves and hanging on regardless of the outlook on any especially dark day.

The principal and lasting damage that my regime suffered as a result of those unlucky murder cases was the loss of honest supporters with no axes to grind. They had always been the foundation of my power, and whenever they deserted, their places had to be filled by others who came at a price. We were drifting into dangerous company. I knew it, and I kept an eye on the horizon for better support. The time was approaching when, if I couldn't banish some of my more and more motley crew, they would take complete charge of the ship.

CHAPTER XLVIII

I had looked forward to a house-cleaning as soon as the federal authorities undertook enforcement of national prohibition. State prohibition had failed from the beginning, with the result that the violators of the law had burrowed into my machine. Now I counted upon a powerful ally in Uncle Sam and prepared to initiate revolution in the Third Ward Club.

The generation that has come into manhood and womanhood since the World War can scarcely realize the tremendous prestige of federal authority in this country in 1917. I thought that it could do anything it undertook, including the finding of needles in haystacks. So did most of the people of my generation.

In this connection I recall a story that I heard when a boy, and never doubted. It is an old story; perhaps

you have also heard it. I have no idea whether it is true or not, nor does that make much difference. The point is that it was quite generally believed. According to this story, a dog in a small town had bitten a child, and a large crowd of men and boys had gathered to catch and kill the dog because they thought it was mad. They were chasing the frightened animal, yelling, shooting, and throwing things at it, when the dog, seeing a friend, hastened toward him. This friend was the village postman. Instead of thinking that he also was in danger of being bitten, the postman opened his arms to the dog, and when the crowd came up, he was petting him, while the dog licked his hands. Nevertheless the crowd was not reassured, but insisted that the postman should step aside so that the dog could be shot. He refused. Angry words and threats followed. Finally, seeing that argument would not avail, the brave postman wrote his own name and address on a slip of paper, attached it to the dog's collar, and placed a two-cent stamp on the paper. "Now," said he, dramatically, "that dog is United States mail. I defy any of you to touch a hair of him." And, according to the story, this mob turned tail and slunk away. They might risk the infraction of state laws, but not the federal authority, because that could never fail.

With the sort of ideas typified by this story forming my approach to the new problem, I refused to doubt that national prohibition would prove a brilliant success. Although I could see that the liquor supply did

not dry up as soon as the Volstead Act became effective, I explained this to myself on the ground that stocks already in existence would have to be consumed. Under state prohibition, stocks could be renewed from across state lines, but it would be different, I assumed, as soon as the lines moved to Canada, Mexico, and the seashore. I waited patiently.

One day a big, broad-shouldered, sun- and wind-burned man, wearing a leather coat, corduroy trousers, and shoes that came nearly to his knees, walked into my office and asked for a certain lawyer whose office was at the other end of the corridor. That lawyer represented Butch and others connected with bootlegging. Something about this man suggested to me, even before he asked for the lawyer, that he was a rum-runner. At any rate I did not dismiss him from my mind at once. He was a powerful, impressive man not likely to be forgotten in a moment.

Next morning I read in my newspaper that he had been shot and killed within six hours of his visit to my office. The killing was a complete mystery. No one knew who he was. I identified him as the man who had visited my office solely by the picture printed in the paper. He had been seen about the business district all afternoon, according to the newspaper's account, but no one had talked to him. He had driven into the city in a medium-priced automobile, parked it for a fee of twenty-five cents, and that night had eaten in a lunch-wagon across from the parking place. On leaving the

lunch-wagon he had been met in the middle of the street by three men. They had fired nine bullets into his body and run away. No one could identify them, nor had any conversation preceded the shooting. It was a plain case of assassination. Evidently I was the only disinterested person who had even a slight clue that might lead to the solution of this mystery. I sent for the lawyer whose office the man had been seeking and told him of the unintended visit to mine.

"And now," I concluded, "you tell me what happened after that."

"I know what happened," he said, "but my testimony wouldn't be worth a plugged nickel and that's why I haven't said anything. This fellow used to be a rum-runner. I have no idea what his name is or where his home may have been, but he had been a rum-runner. I know that because he knew the game and the others in it. He came to me to identify himself as a rum-runner, and he could do that without submitting any documents. As you know from the newspapers, there wasn't a paper on his person.

"He told me that he had a truck-load of booze on the road just outside of town, but that he had been stopped by officers one more time than he had figured on and had had to pay more graft than he had figured on. He said he was broke and wanted to get in touch with a local bootlegger who would lend him a few hundred dollars so that he could pay the necessary

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graft and continue his journey. There are a lot of independent operators of this sort and they sometimes sell out at a bargain, so I gave him five names. He thanked me and went out. That's the last I have seen or heard of him.

"But I know, as well as though I had been told all the details, how he happened to be killed. He must have been one of that small group of bright-witted young men who have figured out a scheme that provides a free tour of the country with no work and very little risk. These fellows represent themselves as independent runners with a truck-load of wet goods that they haven't got. They know the game, but they have retired. They come in and borrow money, one hundred to three hundred dollars for a day or two at high interest. Then they spend a pleasant day in town and in the evening go bye-bye. Tomorrow or next day they will find a new sucker. There's at least one in every community.

"He came to see me, explaining his situation, and asked for the names of men likely to help him. He stung one of those fellows. But his game is about worked out. Too many have taken it up. Evidently whoever it was he stung checked up his story. As I said, more than one bright fellow has been working that game, and some of them do a little high-jacking in between times. I haven't the slightest idea whether he did or not. They've been rum-runners and they rec-

ognize their former buddies on the road and hold them up. The big operators have got to put down such foolishness if they are to continue in business, so they have hired gorillas. The gorillas are simply killers. You don't know who they are, you can't pin their connections or their motives on them. They just aren't anybody. They duck out of the dark, shoot, and scamper. They bumped this fellow off. Now, that's what happened, but I don't know who ordered it done or who did it and I couldn't find out if I started right now and worked at nothing else for a year. There's no reason on earth why I should be told, and, believe me, I won't be, either. Therefore the thing for me to do is forget it. And you may as well forget it also, because every word I have told you is pure conjecture."

Thus I learned of another realm in which I was no longer czar. I could command these people's money for campaign expenses or the talents of such representatives of theirs as dare appear in polite society, and no doubt they would have assisted me with a platoon of their gorillas if I had asked for them, but I could not interfere with their operations. If I should attempt to do so, no doubt they would get rid of me, and not by political means, either. In short, I was the shadow of a boss rather than a real one in the realm in which they operated. I saw no reason to doubt that their business would increase. Why not, if men could go wandering across the country with truck-loads of outlawed merchandise for sale, and actually borrow

## LIQUOR . LOOT . AND LADIES

money on it from strangers? No—from that moment I dismissed the pleasant hallucination that national prohibition would succeed. The picture he presented indicated all too clearly that bootlegging was merely in its infancy.

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## CHAPTER XLIX

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Among the men of mystery whose number steadily increased in our community was one Harry Bee, formerly driver of an ice-wagon, and precinct captain in Mike's old machine. But Bee had prospered amazingly. His little one-room office proclaimed him a realtor, but I was not the only person who marveled that the profits from Hillcrest Addition should provide the means for a home costing a hundred thousand dollars, and six automobiles. The whole of Hillcrest Addition comprised only twenty acres, and some of the lots yet remained to be sold.

One day Mr. Bee returned from a trip to Chicago and immediately after stepping off the train collapsed. He was taken, at his request, to a hotel two blocks away. A physician was summoned and it developed



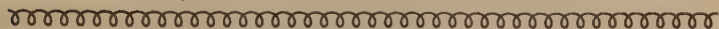
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that Bee had been poisoned. Realizing that this would interest the police, the physician telephoned headquarters and detectives were sent. They asked for the names of any persons Mr. Bee might suspect. He would tell them nothing. Later it was learned that five men had ridden with him in his drawing-room part of the way from Chicago. He would not tell who these men were; their identities were never learned. Bee died five hours after his collapse.

Eager to do what little he could to assist the police, the physician had glanced through the papers in Bee's pockets; it was in this way that he learned who his patient was. But he also learned that Bee had brought with him a trunk full of illegal drugs. When the police after investigation reported that they had found no clues of any sort, this physician came to me and told me, in confidence, what he had accidentally learned. Instantly I understood why this murder had proved so baffling. The police didn't dare solve it because it grew out of the drug traffic and they had been taking bribes from Bee. If the drug traffic had required fixed and open places of business, it would have paid tribute to the boss, but a business which can be operated with a trunk for warehouse and a hatband for retail shop need not go to political headquarters for protection. Bee's small trunk-load of drugs had a value of approximately one hundred thousand dollars. That much booze would have required trucks—and protection. I learned that the first thing done by the detectives

when they arrived on the scene was to inform Bee's lawyer of his condition and that the first thing the lawyer did was to get possession of the trunk.

While the mystery of Bee's death never was cleared up, I think I could explain it. He and some associates in a drug ring had evidently disagreed about something and they had murdered him by putting poison in his drinks while riding with him in the Pullman drawing-room. Until this occurrence came to my attention, I had never realized what large sums were involved in the illegal drug traffic. Our community could not possibly have consumed all of that trunk-load of drugs, so we were evidently an important transfer point for national distribution. Here was another realm in which I was not czar.

The various laws and regulations designated to suppress the traffic in habit-forming drugs are working out in about the same way as the laws to suppress the traffic in alcoholic beverages. The drug habit seems to me so horrible that I can scarcely bring myself to admit that the same fundamental principles which apply to the traffic in alcoholic beverages apply to drugs. But they do. The user of drugs destroys himself—and to keep a man from destroying himself is practically impossible. The principal accomplishment of efforts toward prohibition of the traffic in drugs is to raise the price and the profits. Moreover, it is far easier to smuggle drugs across international boundaries than



to smuggle even jewels, much less anything so bulky as beverages. The traffic continues to grow. And it is far more profitable than any other prohibited traffic of which I have any knowledge.

CHAPTER L

The homicide record that our community was now piling up might have attracted national attention but for the fact that it flowed from identical conditions which were producing approximately the same results elsewhere. Nevertheless, I heard the growing murmur of discontent among our voters and decided to work hard in preparation for the next county elections. By adroit diplomacy I managed to assemble a much better ticket than usual, but I had to compromise on the office of district attorney, which was a hard blow. Butch and his faction were determined to elect Jimmy Farrell in order to carry over to the new administration their power to prevent the successful prosecution of gorillas who from time to time committed crimes of violence for the protection of outlawed busi-

nesses that were steadily becoming better intrenched.

Since Butch and his associates would pour out money literally for the whole ticket if I compromised on Farrell, I decided to let them have that office and then destroy their control of it later. I could do this by having the governor assign four or five special prosecutors to our district to assist us in clearing up our criminal dockets.

Overcrowded dockets are the foundation for lax enforcement of the law. Where they exist—and that is almost everywhere—a prosecutor can easily permit the major portion of his cases to die of old age without committing any act for which he could be impeached. Consequently the first step to take was to clear the dockets. I knew that an appeal to the governor would have legal sanction and the support of public opinion. Also it would be effective. It would bring to prompt trial cases involving defendants in which Butch and his like were keenly interested, and that would tend to destroy the prestige of such persons. They were supposed to be able to protect their hirelings, and the way they did it was principally by delaying trials until all hope of successful prosecution had passed.

My plan was to use the money and the power of these people to meet the existing political emergency, and then wipe them out.

Two days before the election, when the council of the Third Ward Club met to examine the final canvass by precincts, I was uneasy because the figures

showed that we ought to win by only three thousand votes—less than a safe margin. The canvass also showed that we should lose Wards Eight and Ten by about five votes to one. I had never lost them by any such proportion as that and I feared that it might be an indication of the drift in two other close wards.

“Aw, don’t worry about them,” Butch said. “They never vote more’n a third their strength. You go and canvass ’em and you think they’ll vote you black in the face, but when election day comes, they’re all off playing golf.” That had been true often enough before, but this time I feared it might not be. They had been showing too many signs of restlessness.

On the morning of election day I gave more attention to reports from Wards Eight and Ten than any of the others. Until noon the reports bore out Butch’s forecast—a very light vote—but during the noon hour there came a sudden change. Women especially were more numerous than ever before. There was still a chance that this flurry might pass within an hour or two, so I waited hopefully. But the lines of waiting voters lengthened steadily. We had been careful to give these wards an insufficient number of voting-booths.

At half-past two o’clock I received word that several automobile loads of young men were riding through those wards, firing pistols. The lines of voters scattered. Evidently Butch and his crowd had also

been watching those wards carefully and this was their answer to the heavy vote.

Well, it succeeded. When the totals came in, they were even lighter than usual. Our whole ticket was elected, with Farrell trailing. No doubt he would have been defeated but for the timely intervention of Butch's gangsters. I accepted the victory with no rejoicing, for this was the first time in my political career that anything so crude had been used. This was not politics; this was simply a resort to barbarism.

Mike Callaghan telephoned me the following morning. "Let's prosecute those young scoundrels," he suggested. I was hotly in favor of doing so and asked him to come to my office. He arrived at eleven o'clock and we went at once to the courthouse. There we learned that we were just fifteen minutes too late. The seven gangsters who had been arrested had just entered pleas of guilty to charges of disorderly conduct and paid fines of a hundred dollars each. The assistant district attorney who had acted in these cases and agreed to accept the pleas of guilty explained that the defendants had not shot at anyone and had not hurt anyone. Therefore he concluded that disorderly conduct was about the most serious charge he could bring against them, blithely overlooking the possibility of prosecutions under the election law. But the damage was done now. We couldn't re-arrest them.

It would have pleased me to dismiss this event as a

mere incident, but I could not do so. It represented a definite and concrete evolution. The gangster had entered politics as a factor able to tip the scales. And he had entered without my permission. Also he had escaped my attempt to chastise him. This was a challenge I could not reasonably overlook. I went to Butch and told him: "Hereafter any gangster who does anything that affects my interests without acting under my orders is going to be prosecuted." Butch thought the matter over and then said: "All right, boss. I'll remember that." His words sounded submissive, but they really were not. What he understood was that I wanted to co-operate with him in the direction of their outrageous activities. I preferred not to make my point of view more explicit and so ended the interview. It would be better to show him just what I meant by sending some of these scoundrels to the penitentiary, or preferably the gallows.

Five days later another outbreak of hedge warfare occurred in the trucking district. Three truck-drivers were severely beaten by gangsters, and a fourth was shot in the thigh. There were no arrests. Again I ventured down into that uncontrollable province of my empire to find out what the trouble was about. And I found—but let me tell it just as the story unfolded.

CHAPTER LI

Our community carried on an enormous business in eggs and it seemed that for several years the larger dealers had been trying to apportion local territory in such a way as to reduce what they called overlapping.

The term "overlapping" referred to deliveries. One wholesaler would send a truck two miles or more to deliver eggs to someone who could just as well have bought them three or four blocks away. This method of doing business was so extraordinarily wasteful that the larger dealers had attempted to form an organization and apportion territory. But every time a plan of apportionment was presented, the organization promptly blew up. I gathered that the dissenters who took one look at these plans and then rushed out screaming were not without justification. Apportion-

ment offered such juicy opportunities for "putting something over" that human nature as disclosed by the egg business had simply been unable to resist temptation. Thus a local association of dealers had been formed five separate times and just as often dissolved.

Finally a bright-witted gangster had seen in this situation an excellent opportunity to exercise his talents. With the support of several large dealers, who did not realize that they were co-operating with a potential murderer, he had opened an office, labelled "Merchants' Association," and sent out agents to solicit membership. As usual, a majority of the dealers promptly joined. This time, however, the recalcitrant minority soon learned that if they didn't join, they couldn't deliver eggs at all, because their trucks would be stolen or wrecked; or, worse still, their customers would be informed in no uncertain terms that they were to buy no more eggs from these merchants. So brutal were the methods of this association manager that some of his most enthusiastic earlier recruits also protested. They were told to "shut up and get the hell out of here"; whereupon they sent in resignations. But the next day they also suffered at the hands of the gangsters. After one or two "treatments"—to use the association manager's own term—they would offer to return to the fold. In order to do this they had to pay their initiation fee all over again. Briefly, the gangsters had extended their field of operations and in-

creased the number of their tax-paying subjects. Moreover, they operated under a state charter and sent out letters on which were lawfully printed the names of respected business men. The latter were still inclined to doubt that their organization was accountable for the disorder, because they were being informed by the association manager that it was not so. In fact, he reported to them that the recalcitrants had imported gangsters and that they should let him employ guards for them.

This was my first introduction to what has since become known all over the country as a "racket." Here was an association that actually did apportion the business along lines specified in a carefully prepared plan, but the president of the association himself couldn't have resigned without risking a beating. Whether he was fully aware of that fact I do not know. At the time I talked to him, he was still bewildered.

While my investigation was in progress, one of the racketeers committed the slight error of killing a retail merchant whom he had been instructed to intimidate. From the racketeer's point of view it was the merchant's own fault, because he had actually reached for a gun and threatened to defend himself. According to gangland's code, that constituted suicide. I am not trying to be ironic; they felt just that way. For anyone to oppose them constituted, in their opinion, intolerable insolence. We should probably have had another murder mystery on our hands but for the fact that an

intrepid citizen who happened to be in the store to buy a pound of butter for his family's supper table picked up a can of tomatoes and tapped the racketeer on the back of the head with it, thus ending the brief battle with a double knock-out. The wielder of the tomato-can thought that he was defending the merchant from a robber. If he had known that the man was a racketeer he would have hesitated. Robbers were individuals; racketeers traveled in droves.

That must have been gangland's unlucky day, for it also happened that a policeman reached the scene before the racketeer recovered consciousness; not only that, he obtained the names of four eyewitnesses, handcuffed the murderer, and took him to jail.

As soon as I heard of the case, I decided to make it the starting point for a campaign against this form of lawlessness. First I ordered trusted policemen to guard the four eyewitnesses day and night. Within twenty-four hours all of them reported that they had been approached by unknown persons who "wished to speak to" them "privately." Later they received mysterious warnings by telephone and threats by mail. Beyond question, they would not have been available as witnesses two weeks after the murder but for the vigilance of their guards. I have often marveled at the gross stupidity and thoughtlessness of prosecutors who do not guard their witnesses in such cases. I have known them to demand special guards for themselves and still not even think of protecting their witnesses.


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Apparently it is their opinion that a gangster hasn't sense enough to know that a prosecutor can be replaced, but that a witness cannot be.

Knowing that this case ought to result in conviction and the death penalty if properly handled, I announced publicly that I had volunteered to assist in the prosecution. Farrell accepted my offer with a flourish. He could do that easily, since these men were not under Butch's protection. After reading all this in the newspapers old Mike came to see me to find out the meaning of it.

"I'm going to break up racketeering," I told him. "There's only one way to do it, and that's to convict these scoundrels of their crimes and send them to the gallows or the penitentiary. It can be done."

"You think so, eh?" His tone clearly disclosed what he thought.

"I certainly do," I answered.

"How many rackets do you suppose are operating in this town?" he demanded.

I knew of five and named them: two in the building trades, the cleaners and pressers, the laundry business, and the gasoline filling-stations. All of these were paying a monthly toll for permission to live.

"That's about half," Mike snapped. "And it's a good graft. It's growing. It's growing all over the country. You aren't going to stop it. Not with the kind of machine you've got back of you now." At his reference to the sorry thing our machine had become I winced.

“Let’s sit down and talk things over, Mike,” I suggested. “I can see what a mess we’re in, so there’s no use discussing that. The question is what to do about it. I’ve been trying for several years to bring about a revolution and build up the finest political machine I can imagine, but I’m not accomplishing even one step in that direction. I’ve fought Butch and the bootleggers in season and out without even seriously annoying them. I have no connection with the drug traffic and yet it operates under the cover of at least part of the personnel that I am supposed to control as a czar. I have nothing whatever to do with racketeering and I am about to undertake in person the prosecution of it, but you tell me that, no matter what I do, it is going to grow. If it does, it will soon ally itself with the machine. That’s what all the rest of the crooks do. I tried to suppress some of the more flagrant shyster lawyers and you know what happened. They crawled right into my lap. Now I have to confer with them on the organization’s policies. I don’t want the support of any part of any of those gangs of crooks, but they’re rapidly coming to be the nucleus of the machine. Yes, by God, they are that now. Without their gunmen we shouldn’t have won the last county elections. Now, is there something the matter with me and the way I’m running things? Let’s go to the bottom of this. I want the truth. If I can’t do better than I’ve been doing for the last two or three years, I’ll wind up a common criminal. Is there a way out?”

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"I don't see any," Mike answered. "You're caught in the undertow."

"What undertow, Mike? Surely the whole country isn't going to turn criminal."

"The undertow, my lad, is the damn near complete breakdown of government by law. That's where we're drifting and you can't stop it single-handed. We've got a legal system devised hundreds of years ago by remarkably sane men who couldn't imagine more than a handful of simple, useful laws that they thought had better be administered with painstaking patience and no hurry. And now we've piled onto that slow-moving system so many laws that we couldn't enforce all of them even if we threw the jury system overboard tomorrow. That's the first thing that's wrong. We can't enforce the law. And when you can't enforce the law, you presently have bandits running wild. All of this wild and woolly business is simply the effect of a perfectly obvious cause."

"But, Mike, that doesn't tell me what to do about it"

"Quit! That's what to do about it. Get out! Get out while the getting is good. If you stay long enough, they'll be getting you instead of the gangsters. They still think you're running this show. They haven't got sense enough to know that you aren't. If they had that much sense, they'd see the root of the trouble and go to work on it. They were told in grammar school that ours is an absolutely perfect government and they still

believe it. Consequently if anything goes wrong, it must be the fault of the politicians. They don't know that our government today isn't much more than a second cousin to the one established by the constitution. I want to tell you, my lad, that they are a dangerous lot. The time has come to look out for them. They will soon be in a mood to hurt people and you are sitting right where I'd expect one of the first bombs to explode."

"I believe you're right, Mike," I said. "It's a strange situation. I want to work with business—in tune with progress—I want to build things just as we did in the old days—I want to clear the way for still greater progress. That's my idea. I never did want to work with—" I hesitated for a word.

"—the criminal elements," Mike finished the sentence. "They seem like a bunch of Rollos and Mary Anns playing in the back yard, now, don't they? You bet they do," he went on. "I knew that that was all they were doing then. I wasn't working with them. They were working with me. I had a theory of the function of government. By God, I was the governing class in this town, my lad. And you've got to have a governing class. You tried to tie up with business. You can't make a governing class out of business men. They aren't interested. They think they are, but they aren't. They need to be governed a damn sight more than the others. I remember the hot air you talked, about the time I quit. But there was no use arguing

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with you because you were caught in the undertow then. That was the right thing to do because it was the only thing to do. But it couldn't lead anywhere. I knew that. It was just the undertow. Politicians were trying to serve business everywhere. And all of them have come to just about where you are; if they haven't, they're on the way. You made money, but that's all. How much money have you got?"

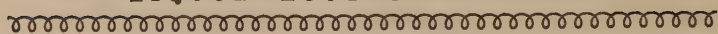
"I'm worth about a quarter of a million, all told," I answered.

"Good Lord!" he exclaimed. "That's more than anybody needs. I quit with almost nothing. You can quit easily, any day."

"I'm going to take one crack at racketeering first," I declared. "I've got to do that. And, anyway, I'm pledged to prosecute that case."

"Of course, of course," he rumbled. "Got to get that off your hands. All right, we'll hang this Pete Whoozis, or whatever the bum's name is. Better look out for yourself; there'll be gorillas and money both in that trial. Want me to stand by? I'm a damn good lawyer even if I haven't got a license. I don't scare easy, either. Want me?"

"I'd be mighty glad to have you, Mike," I said. "I want to conduct this case in such a way that people will remember it when the uprising finally comes. I want to show them how to do it. Some day they've got to go after racketeering blood-raw, and it will be a big help to them to remember how I did it."



"Right!" he exclaimed. "What are you going to show them?"

I was eager to tell him, so we went into conference, talking far into the night.



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## CHAPTER LII

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Gangland had never in its unhappiest nightmares imagined such a trial as I prepared in this case. From the beginning every witness had been secretly guarded, but now they came to the courthouse openly guarded. Every man on the jury panel was guarded. There were not enough deputy sheriffs in the county to accomplish that, so I pressed into service policemen and state troopers. The courtroom swarmed with them. Two armed guards accompanied the trial judge everywhere he went and slept under his roof at night. I was guarded, ostentatiously, and so was Jimmy Farrell.

On the morning of the trial three detectives stood near the big double door of the courtroom and plucked from the incoming crowd of spectators every known

gangster. They were playing their usual game of coming in considerable numbers to any trial in which they were interested. I had been told that they sometimes menaced witnesses by gestures. Their favorite gesture was to throw back their heads, open their eyes and mouths very wide and then draw their index fingers across their throats. The meaning of that could scarcely be mistaken. This time, however, they were rudely grabbed and searched. Five were promptly marched to jail on charges of carrying deadly weapons. The others were told in no uncertain terms to "beat it." Only one raised a noisy protest and he was sent on his way with a thoroughly slapped face.

As soon as a jury had been chosen, the twelve men were informed that they would sleep in the courthouse until the trial was over. I also authorized the two deputy sheriffs guarding them to inform them confidentially that they would be guarded after the trial for as long a period as might seem advisable.

We spent all of the first day selecting a jury. On the second day the actual trial began. I had only five witnesses to offer, but their testimony would have been adequate to hang half a dozen defendants. They were the four eyewitnesses to the murder, and the policeman who made the arrest. In their testimony not a single discrepancy or contradiction developed. Each completed his direct testimony in about ten minutes. Cross-examination consumed twenty minutes to half an hour. At one o'clock I was able to announce: "The

state rests." The defense made a feeble effort to represent the killing as the result of a quarrel that had nothing to do with gang activities. The slain merchant must have mistaken the defendant for a gangster. He had come in merely to protest about the quality of something he had purchased the day before. This was followed with some testimony about the good reputation he had enjoyed several years previously in another city—doubtless before he became a gangster. Having, as a matter of fact, no defense at all, this was the best counsel could do. His speech to the jury followed the usual and orthodox lines in such cases: the defendant was young—and he had a dear old mother. Nearly all gangsters are young, and if their mothers are not dear old ladies, testimony attacking their characters would not be admissible anyway.

The jury was out one hour and twelve minutes and returned with a verdict assessing the death penalty. The defendant looked the foreman squarely in the eye and smiled contemptuously. He had listened to a ten-year verdict once before and nothing came of it. Consequently this sounded to him like more of the same old solemn nonsense.

I thanked the jurors, one by one, and each left the courtroom accompanied by a policeman. The judge had warned the crowd against any kind of a demonstration, and as soon as the trial was over, detectives in plain clothes who had been scattered throughout the spectators' benches began herding the crowd to-

ward the door. They filed out slowly and reluctantly.

Old Mike had been sitting just behind the railing on the front bench with a railroad-company detective on each side of him. I had placed him there to take notes so that he could prepare the brief for the higher court when the case should be appealed. He was a marvel on briefs for the higher courts in both civil and criminal cases.

While the business of getting rid of the crowd and dismissing the jurors was still in progress, I noticed a young, well-dressed man pushing his way into the courtroom. He was vaguely familiar. I knew that I recognized that scar above his right eyebrow, but at first I couldn't recall where I had seen him or what business, if any, I had had with him. Just as I shook hands with the last juror, Mike leaned over the railing and touched my shoulder.

"There's the manager of the Merchants' Association," he said.

We knew that there were gangsters hanging around the courthouse, probably little groups in every neighboring restaurant, cigar store, and pool room. The flagrant boldness of this fellow in pushing his way into the courtroom was no doubt designed to impress them and renew their courage. Consequently it was a challenge that we did not dare overlook. I could think of no excuse for having him arrested just at the moment, and merely to order him out wouldn't suffice.

"Do you want to talk to him?" Mike asked, thinking

that I might have sent for him. The man was standing at the rear of the room, as though waiting for someone.

"I'm going to have his face slapped," I answered. "We've got to run him out of town."

"Right!" Mike growled, and turning, roared at the fellow: "Come here, you!" Profanity would have been an anticlimax after the way he said "you." It implied more than all the profanity that has ever polluted the air. The association manager looked startled for the tiniest fraction of a second, then turned sullen and stood his ground. He was a fighter, all right. Now Mike and one of his two guards were moving toward the fellow. He had time to get away and I could see that he knew he ought to get away, but he couldn't bring himself to run. I wondered why both of Mike's guards weren't going to the attack, but they had an excellent reason. One held a pistol in his hand, ready to use it. He also had the pistol of the giant who was moving into battle bare-fisted. It was an excellent idea. This would be just a fight, unless the gangster produced a weapon; in that case it would be a killing. And the man going after him was twice his size.

The guard swung his beefy right arm and I heard a smack that sounded more like the crack of a high-powered rifle. The gangster went down so precipitately that he didn't even crumple. He was slapped down like a wooden man. In spite of himself he squealed with pain. A second later he began to scam-



ble away on all fours, intending to put a little distance between himself and the guard before rising to run.

"Come back here!" Mike roared, and the fellow stopped. "Stand up!" Again he obeyed mechanically. "I've got something to say to you," Mike continued. "You think you're tough, don't you? You think people are afraid of you. Why, you little shrimp, you've got to get out of this town. You're going to get the face slapped off you every day that I can find you from now on. Hear me?"

These were rhetorical questions, but the gangster actually had the nerve to answer, although half his face was now swollen and scarlet and there was excellent reason to fear for the other half of it.

"Who do you think you are?" he demanded.

When I heard that, I knew the die was cast. We should have to go through with Mike's program. I had intended to harry and harass this fellow, but not quite so openly. Fortunately the judge, the clerk, and all the court officers were out of the room. Only seven or eight persons of no consequence lingered.

I hastened to the scene of combat and interposed a question of my own. "You know who I am, don't you?" I demanded. He nodded sullenly. Then I turned to Mike's guard and said: "Slap him again. Slap the face clear off him this time."

Crash! He was down again. This time his nose was bleeding. I turned to the policemen who acted as my guards and said: "Now kick him out of here." They



assisted him with the boot toe toward the door, where I fired after him the warning: "You get out of town before morning."

It was a horrible thing to do, and yet it seemed to be the only sort of procedure they would understand. Certainly its sickening lack of all sportsmanship exactly paralleled their own operations. I salved my conscience with the thought that it merely gave them a dose of their own medicine. Publicly we reported that the man had refused to leave the courtroom when ordered to do so. And he was in no position to reply. The real story of what we had done quickly traveled through the police department, where it was received with acclaim. Even to the extent that it was whispered beyond the police department, it did me no harm. Politically the effect of this day's doings restored my hope that I could yet regain my prestige, revolutionize the machine, and put it on the right course. I now had Jimmy Farrell right where I wanted him, and the police fairly worshipped me. I could see my way clear to wade in with clubs and guns and make an end of rackets. Indeed, the police took their tip and acted upon it with such promptness and enthusiasm that scarcely a week passed without one or more gangsters suffering more damage from some cop's fists or nightstick than he had ever suffered from the courts.

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## CHAPTER LIII

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We enjoyed a month of this hectic, noisy, holy crusade, with heroes in blue uniforms sprouting on front pages, and then I began to wonder why the only racket that had actually disappeared was the one I had attacked in person. We had freed the egg business of piracy, but all of the other rackets were still going on and I soon learned of two new ones. Again it became necessary for me to go silently on a scouting expedition through those parts of my kingdom where I wasn't king. While I was engaged in this puzzling business, we suddenly acquired a new hero in blue. His performance sent a gleaming shaft of light through the jungle where I had been seeking information. Our new hero was a motorcycle policeman stationed at a point close to the city limits where three main highways touched

each other. These roads had been well worn by the trucks of rum-runners and I knew almost beyond a reasonable doubt that he and all of the other policemen then or at any other time stationed there had collected toll from the traffic. It was strange, then, to read in my morning paper that this brave fellow had shot two rum-runners dead on the seat of their truck and smashed all but one of their barrels of illegal beverages. Such a passion for law-enforcement would bear looking into.

I soon learned the explanation. Rum-runners were not entirely reliable in their dealings with peace officers. They would promise to pay a certain amount on each truck-load and then try to slip an extra one by when no one was looking. Cheating of this kind had been irritating our hero for several years, but he had never known just what to do about it. Now, however, I had shown him the way. Strong-arm methods were in vogue. It would have been dangerous for him to arrest the cheating rum-runners, because too many facts might come out, but they could be given such a salutary lesson with hot lead that in future— Well, that was all there was to it. The police were collecting with greater efficiency.

I began to notice also an increase in the number of mysterious killings attributed to gang warfare. Again and again that phrase appeared in our newspapers and it always seemed to brand the event as of no consequence. I knew that there really had been gang kill-

ings and to some extent gang warfare, but the rise in mortality was suspiciously sudden and suspiciously high. I looked into it and discovered that peace officers were frequently involved. Once given moral support for high-handed methods, there is no certain and reliable way to direct their use of it. The campaign I had instituted to free our community of banditry simply compounded the offense. There is no way to maintain order under the law except by upholding the law. We had failed to do that. Indeed, I don't think it can be done until the law itself is reformed. That is a job for the lawyers—and they need reforming.

The very thing I had feared from racketeering—namely, that it would invade my organization—had now happened. And it was the most subtle invasion of all because it asked for nothing. These men were a law unto themselves. They needed no entangling alliances with “higher-ups.” Just fail to notice their existence and they would prosper. Few of their victims ever complained. The patrolmen on the beats, a few detectives, and some shyster lawyers could give about all the help they needed. But all of the criminal element will double-cross the peace officers they bribe, in spite of the short-sightedness of that policy, and they have often worked their ruin by it. Now, the peace officers could protect themselves from this double-crossing. They could shoot to kill. Therefore they might as well

## LIQUOR • LOOT • AND LADIES

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get into the game and take a cut of the profits. That, in brief, was where my holy crusade led, and where every holy crusade to uphold the law by flagrant violation of it necessarily will lead.

CHAPTER LIV

I had now reached the point where wisdom dictated my withdrawal from practical politics, but even more powerful was the fact that I no longer enjoyed the game. In spite of all my efforts it had ceased to be my kind of game. Just to appear to be winning—and that was what I now appeared to be doing—wasn't enough. The cards were stacked. You could play only one way. There was money to be made that way—and I liked money—but to continue playing meant moving steadily toward an inevitable crash, neither the nearness nor the seriousness of which could ever be predicted. The roll of bosses who have played on and on after the game ceased to be controllable offered sufficient warning; nearly all of these men finished in disgrace, and more than a few of them also finished bankrupt. In-

cluded in the roll of bankrupts are men who had amassed much more money than I. Once the structure collapses, even millions melt quickly.

The gaudy trial I had staged impressed everyone else more than it had impressed me. That was a picked case. Not one out of ten could have been disposed of so quickly. There were others pending that might easily consume two weeks and one or two that could be made to consume a month. How could one withdraw all the peace officers that I had withdrawn from their regular duties to strut in the chorus for each show? Impossible. Mike was right: our real trouble was a breakdown of government by law. Considering the number of cases pending and the frequency of crime, we can't control it with a reasonable and supportable number of courts if our procedure shall continue to permit trials to be dragged out to such lengths as at present are usual.

Analyzed closely, what an absurd spectacle that trial had been! There was the judge, whose biography, if I had told it, would have disgusted the community. Jimmy Farrell's story you know. And my own you know. Jimmy welcoming me as a patriot to uphold the law! He wouldn't have dared do it if the defendant had been one of Butch's gorillas. But, freed of that conflict in authority, he didn't dare refuse. As a matter of fact I had been planning Jimmy's destruction as a step toward law and order. And then there was that horde of peace officers, nearly all of whom had taken

graft. Some were even then stalking about with tainted money in their pockets. Yet, for the moment, they did their work efficiently. Now the defendant was in the state penitentiary, which was honeycombed with the drug traffic and reeking with graft for special favors to convicts who yet had money. Presently the verdict would be upheld by the appellate court—for the trial was flawless—and the defendant would pass into the hands of the state executioner. We paid well for executions, and the man who did the work could afford to pay for his job; so he was required to pay. What a queer crew we were who hounded that gangster to his well-deserved death! Slight wonder that “No man e’er felt the halter draw with good opinion of the law.” The author of these lines was right on more counts than he probably thought of.

The fact that the gangster is now one of the most colorful characters in our national life, I regard as of deep significance. He parades across the stage, the silver screen, and the pages of current fiction. His doings and his way of life are deemed interesting and exciting, yet he isn’t a pleasant fellow and there’s nothing of the Robin Hood about him. In fact, I do not see how anyone can regard him—now that he numbers many thousands and exists almost everywhere—as other than a very dangerous symptom of a diseased economic and social structure.

We need a new frontier, of course, having always had one until only a few years ago, but that is too sim-

ple and facile an explanation of his rise. The explanation of his existence in such appalling numbers must go deeper than that—yes, and deeper than even thoughtful old Mike's statement that we face the breakdown of government by law. Mike's explanation is shrewd, but it names only the immediate and obvious fact. Still further back will be found a deeper cause, and I think I know what it is. We have set a new standard in this country for the measurement of success. Our yardstick is "What do you make?" and "What have you got?" To say that we are sunk in materialism doesn't quite state the case. Every nation has always been rather materialistic. Obtaining the necessities of life forces us to be materialistic. My observation has been that the less people have, the more materialistic they will be forced by the stern logic of life to be. But we have set a standard of success that is simply idiotic. I myself followed it, unconsciously, as most other people do. The fact that old Mike hadn't made much money out of his job when he was boss struck me as an adverse reflection upon his talents. I thought that when I made more money than he, I thereby proved that I was the better man. And all of that thinking was done unconsciously. We judge lawyers by their fees, doctors by the automobiles in which they ride, scientists by the royalties from their patents, and even ministers of the gospel by their salaries. No one is exempt. Even authors are judged by their earnings. Under that test Babe Ruth, the baseball

player, is one of our greatest men of letters, because few novelists earn as much from their books as he receives for a daily article about baseball that appears on the sporting pages of numerous newspapers. This is a test that falls hardest upon the most valuable men in the nation. The outstanding minds in this country, taken as a whole, labor under a burden of discouragement and often a cruel sense of failure, resulting from community opinion that surrounds them like hostile spears.

Business men and the literature they inspire have tried for years to make the successful salesman the most glamorous figure in American life, but he simply is not and never can be. Salesmanship is not a high order of genius, but a low grade of talent, one of the principal elements of which it is compounded being physical energy.

The tremendous urge to meet our new standard of success drives millions of women into wage-earning activities whether they wish to go or not. I am aware that many of them do wish to go ; but, once a sufficient number had enlisted, the others had little choice. I have seen that revolution within my own short lifetime. I wondered years ago, when all of the girls expected to go to work, how long it would be before married women would have to remain at work. Well, that change came fairly quickly. I doubt that the vast majority of the millions of wage-earning wives in this country are on pay rolls of their own free choice. But

they have set a standard that impels them to seek employment outside the home. They must have certain things or regard themselves and their homes as contemptible.

We have now reached the point where nearly every normal act of a normal young man is economically unsound. Biologically, he ought to marry young. Economically, he is a fool if he does. Biologically, his wife ought to have children. Economically, why should she? Children ought to be a sound economic investment, and during most of the life of the human race on this planet they have been a way to safety, plenty, and power. Now, under our new standard, their education wouldn't be completed until their twenty-second year. That may all be very nice, according to some theories, but economically it is insane. As a race we have certain fine old traditions about owning a homestead and they have contributed wholesomely to our life, but today a man who marries young and begins quite early to invest in a home is a fool. That is, economically, he is a fool. A home is no longer productive; therefore he is tying up his capital and credit in something that can't contribute to the advancement of his earning power. By the new economic standard, he would do far better to live in a tent and apply his capital to some enterprise that would earn more revenue. A home ought to be his last purchase, not his first. And people are coming to that. They don't have to analyze the facts as I am doing here. Common sense dictates the

proper course. We have millions of transients today, wandering over the United States looking for Opportunity. And this land is still full of Opportunity, if you mean opportunity to make money rather fast. These people have preserved their mobility by investing their money in four wheels and a gasoline internal-combustion engine instead of in a home. By our present standard of success, they are quite right. But what a way of life! And what kind of a nation will they make? Can we hope for enduring elements of strength and stability from this standard? I think not. As matters stand, we are on our way into the gray mists of departed glory.

But where there is so much vitality, despair seems unreasonable. Perhaps our false standard of success grows out of excessive vitality. We actually succumbed to the hallucination that in a land of unlimited opportunity everyone could excel everyone else in garnering goods—and thus all of us could achieve happiness. As a matter of fact this new yardstick of success is about the poorest ever invented, and nearly all such yardsticks have always been silly. Some, at least, have permitted about half the population to feel successful; if for no better reason, than because they confidently awaited the joys of heaven. Ours, brought to its final *reductio ad absurdum*, can give only one man the certainty of complete success. He would be the richest among us. That won't do even for a notoriously silly race. We've got to get over it. How, I don't

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know. I merely have faith in the tough and durable common sense of the common man. This thing is too insane to last. We shall get over it just as we shall eventually put down the raucous flouting of life and property. Sometimes a situation has to become worse before it can become better. That was the gist of my thought about our own local political situation. Why should I hang on and temporize, with the undertow moving always in one direction? Better to get out and let Butch succeed me. Let them launch an orgy of lawlessness at once.

CHAPTER LV

The resignation of a political boss is not a formal event, except in a few places. Mine was really accomplished when I failed to press vigorously for further spectacular prosecutions of gangsters. Butch knew, and so did most of the others, that I now confessed defeat, even while my praises were still being sung by the populace. I had no title, not even a portfolio to turn in. The sort of boss I was abdicates by a simple gesture.

The Third Ward Club's doughty council met one night in the usual fog of cigar smoke. We were discussing the filling of a prospective vacancy in the office of county treasurer. Gus, he of the rock-crushers, spoke. Then they looked at me.

"I shan't be here when the time comes to act," I

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said. "I'm going to take a little vacation. Fishing trip. You'd better take this matter up later. Don't you think so, Butch?" The job was done. I had resigned and nominated Butch my successor. He would have been anyway. Butch knew what they wanted. And he was itching to get at what he wanted. Some of his clients were being very much annoyed by rival purveyors of entertainment who insisted on invading his clients' territories. There was a way to settle such matters and the machine guns were on hand. Also the gunners. It remained only to clear the way for action.

Mike and I went fishing. And our former subjects went on the war-path. It is amazing to me that they have been able to get away with it as long as they have. . . . But Chicago has revolted and Chicago was no worse than our town. Moreover, it is harder for revolt to get under way in a community as large as Chicago. The day of reckoning is coming for many bosses. Whether it will lead to constructive measures no one can say. And when no one can say, why not take the optimistic view?

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A NOTE ON THE TYPE  
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— — IS SET — —

*This book has been set on the Linotype in Antique No. 1, a design which owes much to the first roman types of Nicolas Jenson. Matter pertaining to its more direct origin is of too poor an authenticity to disseminate any further, and here, since not so much as its designer's name is for a certainty known. The surname Woodruff and the date 1898, and little more, has been recorded in connection with the origin of this face. It is an unlovely face and is of homely design: plain, not unlike the Lining Gothics in general character, a uniform blackness characterizes each separate letter, and easy-reading is its first and, perhaps, its only justification. — — —*

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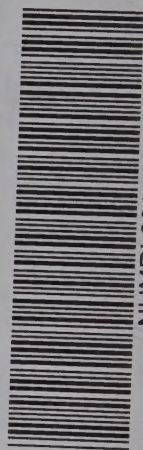








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